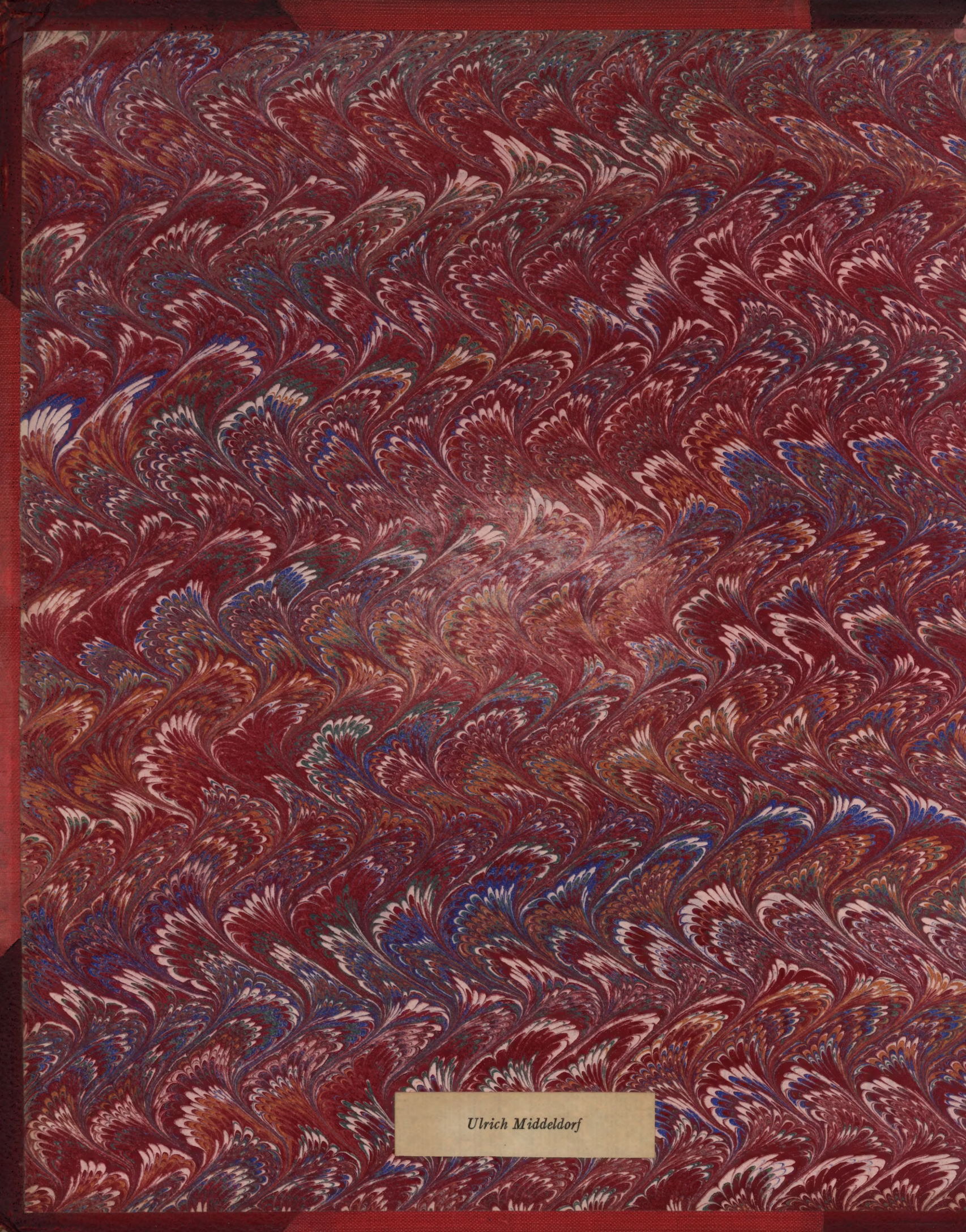

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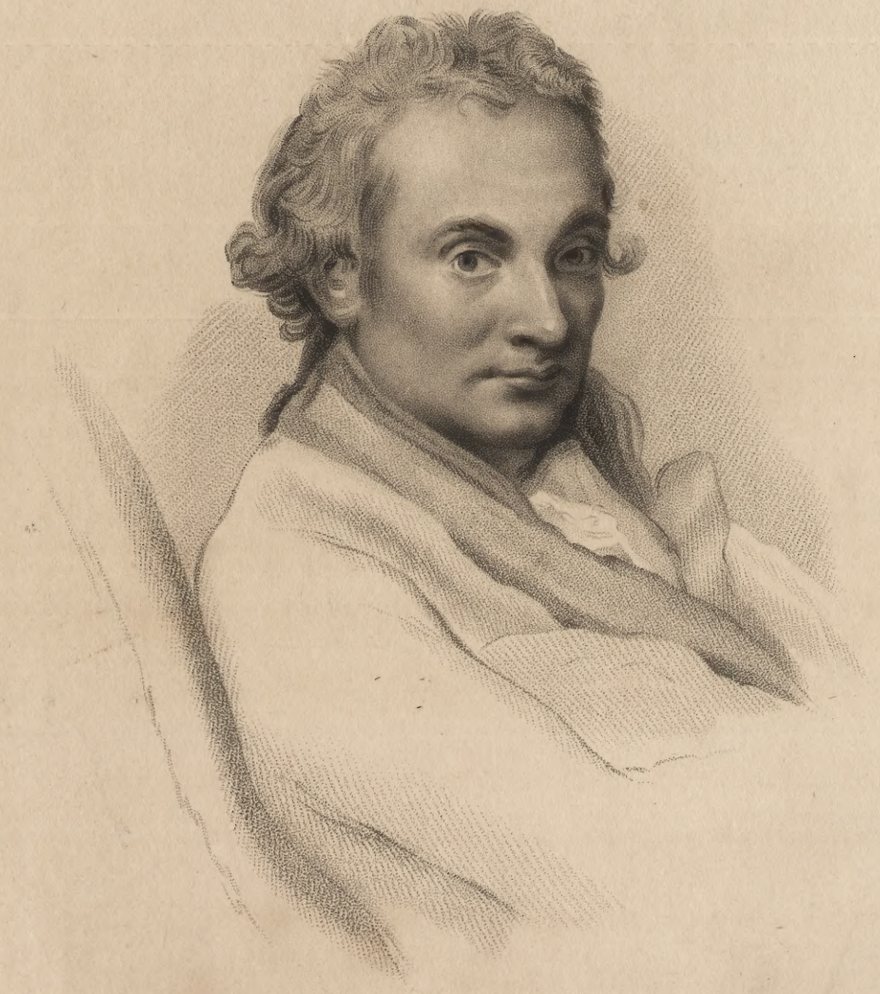
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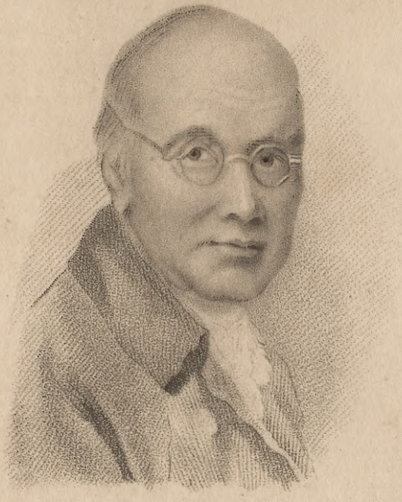
C13

Large Paper copy

Inlaid and impressions of the plates
by Blake and others.

DR12







Three portraits of Romney by himself at different periods of his life.
in Oil. in water colours and in crayons. all painted at Eartham.

Engraved by Caroline Watson, Engraver to Her Majesty, from the original Pictures.

Published April 14th 1809, by Thomas Payne, Pall Mall.

THE

LIFE

OF

GEORGE ROMNEY, Esq.

He was famous in his profession;
And it was his great right to be so.

SHAKESPEARE.

Vittima della sua applicazionne, ci è stato rapito da questa vita, compsanto da tutti gli spassionati, e molto invidiato da coloro, pe' quali il suo merito era un' offesa. Un amicizia la più tenera, e la più pura esige da me lagrime le più sincère del pari, che il tristo e il pietoso officio di spargere alcuni fiori su la sua tomba. L'Ombra dell Amico estinto mi avverte a non contentarmi di fiori' nè di lagrime inutili, e a procurare di adempiere i suoi desideri col rendere utile la sua memoria.

AZARA, vita di Mengs.

BY WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq.

Chichester:

PRINTED BY W. MASON,

FOR T. PAYNE, PALL-MALL, LONDON.

1809.

GETTY CENTER LIBRARY

TO

DANIEL BRAITHWAITE, Esq.

To you, my dear sir, whom Romney used to call his earliest patron in the metropolis, to you, whose kind exertions in his favor, and whose mild endearing manners I have heard him so frequently recall to his recollection with gratitude and delight, I feel irresistibly induced to inscribe the volume, in which I have endeavoured to honor his memory.

It is my wish, and persuasion, that my description of the departed mortal, very singularly dear to us, may be found to correspond exactly with those just and tender ideas of his character, which an intimacy of

many years has left engraven on your heart, and which of course you must wish our country to entertain of a man so truly entitled to her permanent regard.

One of the most pleasing employments of literature is, that of ministering to friendship, and I seem to render a tribute of affection more acceptable to the friendly spirit of Romney, by thus uniting his name to yours, while I testify the cordial esteem with which he always spoke of your virtues: how sincerely we sympathized on the subject, you will receive, I trust, not an unwelcome proof in this public declaration, that

I AM, DEAR SIR,

YOUR VERY FAITHFUL FRIEND,

W. HAYLEY.

PREFACE.

The Introduction and a considerable part of the following work, were written in the year 1803; very soon after the decease of Romney. I was eager to commemorate a very dear departed friend, and eminent artist, according to his own wishes; but the death of others, who had also a strong interest in my heart, interrupted and suspended my task. In preparing a book for publication in advanced life, the author runs an imminent hazard, that before he can finish it, some of those eyes, which he has been most anxious to gratify with a perusal of the completed performance, may be closed for ever. The severest tax on length of life, is the continual loss of confidential companions. The disadvantage arising from losses of that nature may be admitted perhaps as an excuse for several imperfections in the works of elderly writers. Assuredly there would have been fewer deficiences in the present volume, had I been so fortunate as to enjoy a gratification which, as the reader will perceive, I had some hopes of receiving: I mean the gratification of another visit from Colonel Romney. That gentleman (an affectionate brother of the artist) after his final return from the East Indies, where he served with reputation, had kindly past a little time with me in my retirement, and approving what I then read to him of this advancing piece of biography, promised in the most friendly manner to examine

a large mass of his own papers, to collect and prepare for me, whatever could tend to illustrate the life of his generous brother; of whose kindness and liberality to himself, and also to the younger artist of his family, who painted, and died at Manchester, he spoke in terms of the most cordial gratitude, and veneration. It was the purpose of the Colonel to return to me with collected documents of various kinds; but his services abroad had undermined his health; and his letters from Bath and Clifton, soon led me to apprehend, that he would hardly have strength to accomplish any part of his benevolent design. This amiable man is now sunk into the grave; and I have reason to believe, that he died without finding any of those long letters of cordiality and confidence, written to him in India by the painter, which I hoped might enable me to give more interest, and variety, to this history of my friend; and to remedy what appears to me its principal defect, namely that it says too much of myself, in proportion to what it says of others; so that parts of it might rather be entitled, annals of friendship, than the life of an artist. The decease of the Colonel has precluded me from remedying the defect, that I perceived; yet it has made me eager to close, and deliver the volume to the public, lest death, which has repeatedly, and by some very unexpected and severe strokes, interrupted and perplexed, the progress of this performance, should ultimately strike the pen from the hand of the biographer, without allowing him to terminate what he has so long regarded as a sacred duty of friendship. It is more gratifying to the heart to suspend even an unfinished wreath of flowers over the tomb of a friend, than to leave it utterly destitute of due decoration. The impediments and delays that have inevitably occurred, in

preparing my own portion of the book,would have given me still greater uneasiness, had it not been necessary to wait also for the several engravings which I regard as an essential part of the volume, since they display in the most impressive manner the talents of the departed artist. The female heads in particular, engraved by Miss Watson, will be thought, I trust, to confirm very happily what has been said on the felicity of Romney's pencil in point of *expression*. The fertility of his invention may be more exemplified in a future season, whenever my friend, the son of the painter, who possesses in the north a choice collection of his drawings, amounting to more than 550, and who certainly is endowed with discernment, and taste, to decide judiciously on their respective merits, can find opportunities of having a selection of them etched, or engraved, as an appropriate monument of the most honorable kind to the genius of his father. A zealous desire to promote the renown of the artist gave rise, thirty years ago, to the first literary performance, that I ventured to introduce to the public, the same desire, rather heightened, than deprest, by the decease of him, in whose talents and society I delighted, has now conducted me to the close of a publication, in which, as I am inclined to hope, the candid reader may feel its various deficiencies compensated by the literary contributions, that it will be found to contain, and by the spirit, which ought to characterize all the offerings devoted to departed merit, namely the simple spirit of truth and affection.

LIFE

OF

ROMNEY.

IN observing how feelingly the honest Montaigne expatiates on his felicity in having enjoyed, during four years, a delightful intimacy with an accomplished friend, I am led to reflect (and with sentiments of gratitude to the Giver of every good) on a similar blessing, that I was permitted to cherish and retain for a period of much greater extent. It was my lot to preserve for the fourth part of a century a confidential intercourse with one of the most singular and interesting mortals, who ever enlivened and embellished human life by the successful cultivation of extraordinary talents. I had the good fortune to form an acquaintance with Romney, the celebrated

artist, soon after I had relinquished a house in London for the purpose of settling on a rural spot, where the scenery had various attractions for the eye of a painter. The circumstance proved favorable to the increase, and confirmation, of our early friendship. Having persuaded the over-busied artist to consult his own delicate health, and indulge himself in a few holidays, for the sake of giving new vigor to his tender nerves by breathing the salutary air of a village in the South, I had the gratification of seeing him induced by the beneficial and pleasant effects of such relaxation to devote a part of every autumn to a scene, that he fondly admired, and soon regarded as a secondary home. In that scene I had, for many years, the annual delight of perceiving, that the visit of my friend never failed to refresh, and invigorate, his often-exhausted health; and that his genius arose to bolder exertions from the inspiriting influence of our united and congenial studies,

"While art reflected images to art."

In one of our socially studious mornings, many

years ago, I began to write a brief series of memoranda, such particulars of his personal history, as he wished me to collect from his own lips, in consequence of his affectionate desire, that if I happened to survive him, the life of the painter might be faithfully recorded by his most intimate friend. Subsequent years of sickness, and sorrow, which impeded my literary pursuits, rendered this a very improbable event; and prevented my collecting other materials for a work so tenderly suggested. It has however been the will of Heaven to extend my mortal existence beyond that of the great artist, whose studies I have so often exulted to promote, and experience has taught me, that nothing conduces more to soothe a feeling spirit under the loss of a beloved, and lamented associate, than a resolution to exert all the faculties it retains, in a just and generous endeavour to honor departed excellence by the genuine records of truth, and affection.

The wish of a deceased friend, whose professional merit was so eminent, would be alone sufficient to

animate a biographer, but I have an additional motive to prepare a life of Romney; a memorial of my friend has appeared, which I could not peruse without feelings of indignation; for tho' it bears the signature of an author of great, and of deserved celebrity, it is in truth a coarse misrepresentation of the man, whose memory it is my duty, and my delight, to defend, as far as justice can allow me to proceed in his defence.

I respect the talents, the reputation, and the age of Mr. Cumberland; but the more worthy he is of being respected, the more inclined he will be not only to pardon, but to applaud, my zeal, in pointing out the mistakes into which he has fallen, in his hasty sketch of Romney's character exhibited in the European Magazine. He will, I hope, have the manly candor to acknowledge those mistakes, and the more readily as he declares, that he wrote his involuntary memoir of our departed friend under feelings of modest reluctance; persuaded, that he should not happily accomplish an undertaking pressed upon him, and lamenting that *some intimates* of the departed artist,

whom he politely represents as possessing superior abilities, and more leisure, to execute such an arduous task, oblige him *by their indolence* to assume, what his diffident spirit would have willingly declined. I know not how far Mr. Cumberland might intend, that I should take to myself any share of the compliment, or the censure, contained in his remarkable inuendo concerning the intimates of Romney: but having enjoyed, for many years, a most confidential intercourse with that memorable genius, and being invited by himself to pay all the regard in my power to his posthumous reputation, I feel it incumbent on me to declare, that I am neither cold, nor indolent, in preparing to discharge, what I consider as a sacred duty. Indeed in advanced life, there is no occupation more attractive than such affectionate study, as enables a man to recall, and delineate, in the truest point of view, the various endowments of persons worthy of everlasting remembrance, whom it has been his lot to know perfectly, to love, and to lose. The society of a living friend is justly ranked among the most valuable of human pleasures; but to vindi-

cate, and promote, the just honor of the dead is a delight of peculiar sweetness, and sanctity. Perhaps every man, in contemplating the very best of his living friends, is occasionally hurt by some inequality of character, some accidental asperity of humour, or some of the numberless infirmities, " that flesh is heir to," but in reviewing the *meritorious* mortal divested of mortality, all painful remembrance of his imperfections is so absorbed, or softened, in the blaze of his predominant merit, that genius, and virtue, then produce their full, and unobstructed effect. The real character of such a mortal, preserved in true appropriate praise, operates on his surviving friends as a powerful medicine conveyed in a perfume.—In regaling the sense it invigorates the heart.

I could wish, in describing Romney, to attain that happy union of delicacy, and force, that graceful fidelity of description, which so frequently attended his pencil; but without indulging such an ambitious hope, I may gratify my own heart, if I adhere to the simple truth of resemblance so faithfully, as never to distort

a feature in the character of my friend—a kind of infidelity, into which Mr. Cumberland has fallen, if I may trust my own feelings, when he says of Romney, "conscious of his deficiency in point of education, he was never seen at any of the tables of the great, Lord Thurlow's excepted." Do not these expressions seem to intimate, that Romney was a low, vulgar being, who had no relish for the enjoyments of highly polished society? Very different were the sensations of the painter. Had he been influenced by such feelings as are imputed to him in those sarcastic words, he would rather have avoided than have wished for a familiar intercourse with several persons distinguished by their intellectual endowments. But on the contrary Romney had a high relish for the conversation of those memorable departed scholars, Dr. Warton, Gibbon, and Cowper. He felt nothing of painful or of aukward constraint in their company. The remarkable assertion of the memorialist, taking it as a mere matter of fact, is a palpable mistake, for the names of more than three noblemen, not including Lord Thurlow, might be mentioned, at whose tables Romney has been

seen as a most welcome guest. He did not indeed officiously make court to the nobility, because he had observed, that those, who did so, have often become objects of ridicule like Mr. Blandish (in an excellent comedy of General Burgoyne's) by a display of manners fawning and fulsome, which to Romney were peculiarly disgusting. Though he had not the advantages of a refined education, he had, to an uncommon degree in his season of health, that real politeness, and delicacy of behaviour, which is the result of very quick perceptions, and of genuine benevolence. In truth no man in polished society could be more perfectly free from that coarseness of character, which the hasty account of his memorialist has been thought to imply.

In my endeavour to form such a full and just representation of his life as he wished me to execute, I consider it my duty to remark such expressions of Mr. Cumberland, as have appeared to me, and to the relations of Romney, to cast a shade of unmerited obloquy on the memory of our friend. It is a painful duty, and

to counteract the pain it gives me, I eagerly seize this occasion of declaring, that I shall also have the pleasure of citing some animated verses of the same elegant author, which prove him to have the merit of being the first poetical herald, who announced, and recommended, the talents of the modest Romney to the patronage of our country,

No friend to truth can think Mr. Cumberland has passed the proper limits of friendship to the dead, in saying "Romney had his failings." Perhaps none of his intimates had such opportunities of perceiving, or such peculiar cause to pity, and lament his failings, as I had. It is a moral question of great delicacy, how far it may be incumbent on a confidential biographer to display, or to conceal, the imperfections of his departed friend: could the great artist himself answer such a question from the tomb, I am confident he would reply in the words of his favorite Shakespeare:

"*Speak of me as I am: Nothing extenuate,*
Nor set down aught in Malice."

He had in truth very admirable powers, and very singular infirmities of mind; and he had also such a noble portion of genuine philanthropy, that I am persuaded, he would wish even those infirmities to be recorded, as far as the record of them may be productive of good to the great interests of human nature, and by extending the knowledge of mental weaknesses, advance the progress of mental discipline, and improvement.

By having fortunately preserved a very extensive collection of Romney's letters, I shall be enabled to display, in his own words, his mind and heart to my reader; and I shall feel an honest pride in shewing the world, that my friend, tho' he had never been instructed in the languages of Greece and Rome, yet possessed that simple, and powerful, eloquence, of nature, which flows in abundance from a strong understanding, when it is united to exquisite tenderness of heart. The extracts from his letters, which I shall occasionally introduce, will illustrate, in the most agreeable manner, the spirit of the painter, and the

kindness of the friend. Let me now hasten to close this introduction to my projected work by briefly stating the scope of it. My ambition is to render my readers as well acquainted with Romney, as I had the happiness of being myself, and for this reason, because I feel a soothing internal conviction, that the result of such acquaintance must be high admiration for the genius of the artist, with a cordial affection for his virtues, chequered and softened by tender compassion for the foibles of the man.

GEORGE, the third child of JOHN and ANNE ROMNEY, was born the 26th of December, 1734, at Dalton in Furness, a singular, and picturesque, tract of high and low land in the county of Lancaster. John, his father, was a native of the same place, and engaged in various occupations, as a builder, a merchant, and a farmer. He possessed, with great activity of mind, a

tender and a devout spirit. His residence was a little patrimonial and freehold farm not far from Furness Abbey. His only wife, Anne Simpson, was a native of Cumberland, and of a genteel family. She produced according to her son's account eleven children, ten sons and a daughter. The eldest boy, William, was apprenticed to a merchant in Lancaster, and died early. George, the subject of this memoir, attended, for a very few years, a school in the village of Dendron, but was educated chiefly at home. He assisted his father in superintending his workmen; and was consulted, in all points, as a friend, by that affectionate parent, after he had attained the age of twelve years. Having discovered at that period a great passion for mechanics, he employed himself in a variety of devices; particularly in carving small figures in wood, to which he was led by the ardor of early uninstructed genius. He was enthusiastically fond of music, and passed much time in various experiments to make violins of different shapes and powers. In advanced life he took great delight in recollecting the ingenious industry, that he

exerted as a boy. He carefully preserved the favorite violin of his own construction, and has been heard to play upon it in the house, which he had filled with the productions of his pencil;—" a singular coincidence of arts (as Mr. Cumberland has very justly observed) in the person of one man!"

The fortunate incident, which led him to a cultivation of the particular art, that he was destined to profess, and to adorn, was simply this: In his youth he observed a great singularity of countenance in a stranger at church; his parents, to whom he spoke of it, desired him to describe the person—he seized a pencil, and delineated the features from memory with such a strength of resemblance, as amazed and delighted, his affectionate parents. The applause, that he received from this accidental performance, excited him to draw with more serious application.

Mr. Cumberland has represented Romney in his boyish days as a prodigy: " that an obscure, untutored

child of nature (says that gentleman) who had never seen, or heard any thing, that could elicit his genius, or urge him to emulation, should at once become a painter without a prototype, seems, in the instance of Mr. Romney, a creation of his own!"

Had the account, which the memorialist has given of the juvenile student been exactly true, he might indeed have been contemplated with astonishment as a kind of prodigy, but as a great moral poet has eloquently observed

" *Nature well known, no prodigies remain.*"

Young Romney had an instructor, of whom Mr. Cumberland appears not to have heard; an instructor very different from the simple, good-natured, journeyman cabinet-maker, who boarding with Romney's father happened to lend a monthly magazine to his son, and who, from that little act of good-nature, is graciously styled by Mr. Cumberland " The unconscious patron of the arts, and the founder of the painter's fortune."

The talents, and the ambition, of the young artist were awakened, and cherished, by an intimate friend of a more elevated and accomplished spirit; a person, whose memorable history Romney related to me with affectionate minuteness, not without shedding tears of gratitude, in describing his beneficial kindness; and tears of pity, for his calamitous fate. The anecdotes of a person important to the early life of Romney appear so highly interesting, that I hasten to transcribe them exactly from the book, in which I had recorded them from the lips of my friend.

When the young draftsman had attained the age of fifteen, there came to settle in his neighbourhood a very remarkable character, who had great influence on his future pursuits.

The name of this ingenious, but unfortunate, man was John Williamson; he was a gentleman of small fortune near Whitehaven in Cumberland, who had passionately devoted himself to natural philosophy, music, mechanics, and above all to the fascinating

study of alchymy. This pursuit has been the ruin of many an enthusiast, but it produced the ruin of this amiable man in a manner so singular, that the particulars of his miscarriage are worthy of being preserved as a memento to future chemists, and the fair partners of their fortune.

He had bestowed much time, trouble, and money, on preparations for the grand experiment of making gold. He drew nigh to the decisive hour; and was watching, with peculiar anxiety, his furnace, whose fire he had kept, with the utmost regularity, for nine months, when his wife requested him to attend some of her company at the tea-table. Her persevering importunity induced him, tho' with great reluctance, to comply with her request. Never was conjugal complaisance more unfortunate, except in the case of our first parents.

While the projector was attending the ladies, his furnace blew up, and all his high-raised hopes were utterly demolished by the explosion.

In consequence of this event, he conceived an antipathy against his wife, so vehement, that he could not endure the idea of living with her again. These sensations induced him to change his residence, and to settle at Dalton. Among his various occupations he had often amused himself with the pencil; his drawings were sufficiently pleasing to excite the emulation of young Romney, whose talents and industry he particularly delighted to encourage, both in drawing, and music.

Romney, to whom nature had given a heart as easily moved to compassion, as she ever gave to any mortal, of either sex, conceived the most tender pity and regard for this unfortunate projector. The variety of instruction, which he imparted to his young friend, in the most benevolent and engaging manner, was not only a constant source of beneficial amusement, but inspired the grateful youth with such an esteem for his instructor, that, I believe, the influence of that esteem gave a bias to the conduct of Romney in one

extraordinary, and much to be regretted measure of his early life. But of this in its proper place. In his juvenile days our artist employed himself as chance directed, in the house of his parents. His first situation on leaving home was under the care of Mr. Wright a friendly cabinet-maker of Lancaster, who informed Mr. Robinson of Windermere, the worthy pupil of our painter, that having observed in young Romney a frequent habit of occupying his own time, and also that of the workmen, his associates, in sketching such attitudes from them, as particularly struck his fancy, he suggested to his father the idea of making his son a painter, and at the same time recommended a person, from whom he imagined the youth might soon acquire considerable knowledge of an art, to which he had discovered so strong an inclination. This person was a young travelling artist, who had then acquired so much business in Kendal, that he wanted a pupil.

The master, who was destined to be the chief instructor of a disciple so illustrious, was himself but

twenty-four years old, and had received no instruction, but what he derived from Richard Wright, a painter of shipping at Liverpool, and from a year's residence in Paris: but however imperfect the education of this young artist might be, he was far from deserving the very coarse appellation of an itinerant dauber, too hastily applied to him by Mr. Cumberland. That gentleman, who has said (if I remember right) in verse

" *What so thin,*
So full of feeling, as a poet's skin?"

Would, I dare say, have corrected himself, and have abstained from so rude an expression, had he been aware, that it might give pain to a respectable brother of the person so contemptuously described. A friend of mine, who was himself educated as an artist, but whom time and chance have settled in a different profession, has recently informed me, that a brother of Romney's master is now living in his neighbourhood,

an amiable physician, who has expressed himself not a little offended by seeing the coarsest of professional names so unjustly applied to his relation.

The young master of Romney, whose name was Steele, was a native of Egremont in Cumberland, and, as Romney described him, eccentric in his talents, and character, but far from wanting attractions, either as an artist, or a companion: It certainly reflects no disgrace on his discernment, in the former character, that he sought instruction at Paris instead of London, when painting in our island was sinking into insipidity under the tame and heavy pencil of Hudson; who, with all his defects, was at that time considered as the first of his profession. Steele undoubtedly improved himself as a painter by his excursion to France; and my friend, who related to me the situation of his brother, declares he has seen pictures executed by the master of Romney, that discover sound principles of art. His social qualities, as his pupil has often said, were engaging to a great degree, and conspired with a constitutional gaiety and indo-

lence, to prevent his applying very assiduously to his profession. By residing in Paris he had acquired a passion for finery, and a general turn to expence, which he could ill support by his customary employment of painting heads at four guineas a piece. He hoped to improve his fortune by an advantageous marriage. He had engaged the affections of a young lady, and projected an elopement to Scotland with her, tho' she was vigilantly guarded. This circumstance induced him to employ his young pupil in conducting the delicate and private business of his love, instead of confining him to the severer labors of the pencil. In this anxious affair the vigilant and active Romney contracted a violent fever, which had nearly proved fatal to his life, and which, in its singular consequences, had a very important effect upon all his subsequent days. While his triumphant master was consummating his nuptials in Scotland, the luckless disciple was suffering in Kendal the pains and confinement of a severe illness, which arose from his exertions in assisting the escape of the bride.

The juvenile pupil, left desolate and sick in the lodgings of his distant master, was attended by a young woman of the house, whom he described as a person of a compassionate character. The pity so natural to a female attendant on a young lonely invalide, and the gratitude of a lively convalescent, produced an event, which can hardly surprize any person acquainted with human nature, a precipitate marriage.

George Romney, the inexperienced apprentice to a painter, himself of little experience, was married in Kendal, to Mary Abbot of Kirkland, on the 14th day of October, 1756.

There is a kind of rash repentance for an imprudent and irretrievable measure, which may be infinitely more imprudent, and more injurious, than the measure itself—such repentance was the great error and infelicity in the life of my too apprehensive friend. It is a maxim too prevalent in the world, and a maxim, which, from its unfavorable influence on the great interests of mankind, deserves the most zealous ani-

madversion, that early marriage is a mill-stone round the neck of an enterprising young man, who aspires to make his fortune by the cultivation of his talents. Perhaps it may lessen the influence of this ordinary, but pernicious, maxim to observe, that Shakespeare assigns it to one of his most ridiculous, and contemptible characters: His Parolles says to the young Count of Rousillon,

"*A young man married is a man, that's marr'd.*"

But the falsity of the maxim is most happily exemplified in the personal history of this pre-eminent poet, who ventured himself to marry so early, that he had only completed his nineteenth year in the month preceding the birth of his eldest daughter, Susanna. There is an excellent letter of the philosopher Franklin in favor of early marriage; it is still however too frequently represented as a mill-stone round the neck of a young man aspiring to eminence, and my readers may be the more inclined to pity the juvenile Romney for having acted under the distracting influence of such

an idea, when they are informed, that, in a very mature season of life, his great rival, Sir Joshua Reynolds, entertained the same erroneous apprehension. When a young student, of the highest hopes in our country, waited on that illustrious President of the Academy, and said "that he was preparing to pursuse his studies in Italy, and that he was just married:"—" Married, (exclaimed Sir Joshua) then you are ruined as an artist." If the mildest, and most polite painter of Europe could, by the influence of this pernicious idea, be hurried into an expression so coarse, so cruel, and as the event most happily proved, so utterly false, what agony of spirit may we justly suppose the same idea to have produced in the young married Romney, whose consitutional character united the opposite extremes of the most apprehensive diffidence, and the most aspiring ambition! He described his mental sufferings on this occasion in terms, that might excite compassion even in a flinty heart.

The terror of precluding himself from those distant honours, which he panted for in his profession,

by appearing in the world as a young married man, agitated the ambitious artist almost to distraction, and made him resolve very soon after his marriage, as he had no means of breaking the fetters, which he wildly regarded as inimical to the improvement and exertion of genius, to hide them as much as possible from his troubled fancy. The return of his master from his nuptial excursion, and his sudden removal from Kendal to York, which took place in a few days after the marriage of his apprentice, afforded a most seasonable termination to this excruciating conflict in the mind of Romney.

Being thus removed from the object of his inquietude, he gradually recovered the powers of his extraordinary mind, a mind of exquisite sensibility, and of towering faculties, but unhappily distracted with a tumultuary croud of ambitious and apprehensive conceits.

During a residence of nine months at York with

his master, he devoted himself entirely to his art, and he gratefully represented his young instructor as willing to instruct him to the utmost of his power. Mr. Cumberland having heard, that the painter, Steele, had acquired from his passion for dress and splendor the sportive appellation of Count Steele, has thought proper to enliven his narrative by representing the young master of Romney as a farcical, envious, and malevolent character. He may have authority for doing so, of which I am not aware, but in justice to the memory both of the master, and the disciple, I think it incumbent on me to say, that Romney never represented Steele to me as infected by that despicable passion, a mean and malignant jealousy. Mr. Cumberland represents the master of Romney as acting towards his pupil under the influence of such a jealousy, and supposes it to have arisen from an intuitive sagacity in the celebrated Sterne, then residing at York, which led that penetrating genius to discover all the undisplayed talents of the disciple, and to prefer him as already far superior to his master. The ingenuous Romney gave me a very different ac-

count of the little acquaintance he had with the fascinating author of Tristram Shandy. It arose simply from the circumstance of Sterne's sitting to Steele for his portrait, and according to Romney's account of it, proceeded no farther than to such common civility, as every discerning and good-natured man, in sitting to a painter, would readily pay to his attentive and promising pupil. Romney did not even make a drawing, for his own gratification, from the interesting features of Sterne. He had however the advantage of seeing, perhaps of copying, some good pictures in York; but all the time he resided there, he worked under the direction of Steele, as his apprentice, and returned with him in that capacity to Kendal. Soon after that event the family affairs of his master rendered it necessary for him to visit Ireland, and before his departure he generously released his young friend from the bond of his apprenticeship.

Romney had received from nature a propensity

propensity to take more than common delight in contemplating, both as a man, and an artist, the endearing smiles, and playfulness of infancy, yet the over-ruling influence of ambition impelled him to sacrifice all those inestimable enjoyments, which a man of tender feelings, who has chosen a dutiful wife, is generally anxious to secure by devoting some of his time to cultivate, even in their earliest years, the affection of his children. On his return from York to Kendal, after an absence of several months, he had not only a dutiful wife, but an infant boy, to attach him to a domestic establishment, but the imagination of Romney, tho' tender and even trembling, was ardent in the extreme—it was like the spirit of Alexander's horse, that altho' apparently equal to any exploit, would start at his own shadow. The young artist became, by the cancelling of his indentures, completely his own master, yet, like his early friend, the unfortunate alchymist, he beheld in an innocent wife a supposed impediment to every splendid project. Perhaps the example of a friend, whom he had tenderly regarded, might influence the conduct of the painter: at all events he resolved in-

stead of settling, as a family man, to wander forth alone into the distant world in quest of professional adventures. The state of his finances rendered it impossible for him to execute this resolution immediately; but whenever the fervent fancy of Romney had formed a favorite purpose, he generally verified the maxim of Shakespeare, that " all impediments in fancy's course, are motives of more fancy." His mental and his corporeal powers were admirably suited to triumph over any difficulties, that he might have to subdue. He had the spirit of industry, united to that of genius, and few mortals could sustain assiduous labour, so long as he could, in a single occupation. In working rapidly, and patiently, at different places in the North for a few years, (by painting heads as large as life at the price of two guineas, or figures at whole length on a small scale for six guineas, and some historical pictures, which he disposed of by a raffle) he contrived to raise a sum amounting almost to an hundred pounds;—taking thirty for his own travelling expences, and leaving the residue to support an unoffending partner, and two children,

(for he had at this time a daughter, who, tho' a very promising child, lived only three years) he set forth alone, without even a letter of recommendation, to try the chances of life in the metropolis.

Before we proceed to his exertions in that extensive theatre of contending talents, it may be proper to mention the subjects, that he had chosen for the early exercise of his historical pencil, while he was a very inexperienced provincial painter.

It is remarkable, that the artist, who took an active and a friendly part in the first formation of that noble national project, the Shakespeare Gallery, began his historical career by two designs from our great dramatic poet: The scene, in which Cordelia is attending Lear on his couch, and that of the old king in the midnight storm. These pictures, peculiarly interesting to an early associate of the painter, are in the possession of his respectable friend Mr. Walker, the philosopher, The picture which Romney himself considered as the most powerful pathetic specimen of



W. Hamer Sculp.

The introduction of Doctor Slop into the parlour of Mr. Shandy.

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his juvenile talents was a large composition on the death of David Rizzio. The fate of this production is at present unknown, but its singular merit made a lasting impression on the memory of those who saw it, as the young artist was very successful in representing both the beauty and the compassionate tenderness of the queen. The versatile genius of Romney could equally excel in subjects of pathos and of humour. His acquaintance with Sterne induced him to exercise his pencil in delineating the comic scenes of that exquisite writer, whose pages are so full of picturesque effect. The painter's favorite composition of this kind was Obadiah making his bow to Dr. Slop as the Doctor is falling in the dirty lane. Another picture of this series, representing the introduction of the bemired Dr. Slop in the parlour of Mr. Shandy, is justly regarded as a work of great comic power; it is now in the possession of Sir Alan Chambre, who has politely granted me the privilege of decorating this volume with a print, that will enable my readers to judge of Romney's early talent for works of invention.

It has been supposed, that these, and other pictures, which discovered, at this period, the original genius of the young artist, were executed at Kendal; but I was informed by Colonel Romney, that his brother soon after his return from York went to exercise his art for a year in Lancaster, having left his wife at Kendal, and I have recently learned several particulars concerning these early exertions of the painter by an obliging letter from that very respectable friend of Romney, who has enjoyed the singular gratification of being one of the first, and one of the latest subjects of his pencil, I mean his long, and invariably, esteemed friend, Mr. Walker. That gentleman in his kind answer to some questions concern-the young days of an associate whom he ever highly regarded, speaks of our favorite artist in the following liberal, and affectionate terms:

" For my own part, I entertained, at that time, such a deference for his taste and opinions, that I founded my own upon them, and we became inseparable. Being invited to Lancaster, where he took

many portraits, we lodged in the same house, where I was often his layman, while he painted the death of Le Fevre, Dr. Slop with Obadiah, King Lear with Cordelia, and several other pictures. The first of these was much admired. The figures were about eighteen inches long, and wonderfully expressive. The dying lieutenant was looking at Uncle Toby (who sat mute at the foot of the bed) and by the motion of his hand was recommending his son to his care: The boy was kneeling by the bedside, and with eyes that expressed his anguish of heart, was, as it were, turning from a dying to a living father, begging protection, a most pathetic figure. Trim was standing at a distance in his usual attitude, and with a face full of inward grief. What became of this admirable picture I cannot tell."

Several of Romney's earliest friends agree with Mr. Walker in regarding this death of Le Fevre as a master piece of pathetic expression, I have therefore made many enquiries in the hope of discovering a

curiosity so honorable to the youthful genius of my friend, but hitherto my endeavours to trace the destiny of the picture have not been successful. All I have been able to discover, amounts only to this; that Romney brought it with him to London, where it was particularly admired by his friend Mr. Braithwaite, who has repeatedly assured me he thought it the most affecting picture he ever beheld. It probably contributed to inspire that gentleman, who is truly a man of feeling, with his tender friendship for the artist, which lasted thro' life, and upon which in his maturer years he often reflected with pleasure and gratitude, ever praising the person, whom he styled his earliest patron in the metropolis, for elegance of mind, and purity of heart.

Since it has pleased some of Romney's occasional companions to misrepresent him in a very coarse manner, as utterly illiterate, I shall here insert a passage from one of his juvenile letters to Mr. Walker, who has gratified me with the original manuscript. It was written some years before the young painter's

first visit to London, and as the worthy friend to whom it was addrest, has justly observed, it shews the original cast of Romney's mind. Let me add that it appears an interesting specimen of that affectionate pleasantry, with which two intimate fellow-students destined to excel, one in art, and one in science, were used to write to each other in their early days, when their mutual regard formed a chearful, and not a fallacious presage of their future celebrity.

From George Romney, at Lancaster, to his friend Adam Walker, at Preston.

" On Tuesday morning, at six o'clock, I had just raised my head from my pillow to go and mount my hobby-horse, when my mortal clay proved so heavy, I sunk down into the hollow my round shoulders had made. My imagination immediately took a journey—Oh imagination where wilt thou ramble, and what wilt thou seek? Did not I find more pleasure in thy contemplative excursions than in bodily

enjoyments, I would not give two-pence for this world. But I say my imagination took a journey, a journey it often takes; never a day comes, but it is wandering to that same Preston. What it can find there so attractive God knows. However when I had travelled over that vast tract of land in half a second, the first object that saluted my sight was a tall, lean figure, walking with an important air, as erect as the dancing-master in Hogarth's Analysis. " Good God! (say I to myself) who can this be? I certainly must know the person, but he seems so disguised with that importance and gravity, which look so like burlesque, I can scarce forbear smiling." As he approached nearer, he turned his face towards me—with an earnest look made a stand—threw off his disguise by drawing up the muscles of his cheeks, and hiding his eyes. Astonishing! I stood motionless three seconds, then ran up to him, catched hold of his hand with the eagerness with which sincere friends generally meet; " My dear Walker how do you do? By my soul I am glad to see you, and find you are well, &c." " O Sir, not so familiar."—" Sir I humbly beg par-

don for saluting your importance in so rough a manner in the open street, &c."

After more raillery on the gravity of his friend, as a teacher of philosophy, the young painter proposes future parties of pleasure, and concludes with a list of the portraits, to the number of twenty-seven, on which he had been engaged since his correspondent left him at Lancaster to attend his own scholars at Preston.

The various pictures executed at Lancaster and Kendal served to raise that little, but highly important, fund, which enabled the resolute artist to leave those, for whom it was his duty to provide, with some money for their maintenance, and to transport himself, alone and unpatronised, into that distant world, with which he was utterly unacquainted, but where he was resolved to rise, or perish, in the most sedulous cultivation of his professional talents.

From this view of his first adventures, it appears,

that Romney may be called, with peculiar propriety, *the architect of his own fortune*, and that in laying the foundation of it, he displayed, in no common degree, the spirit of enterprize and resolution. His singular efforts to acquire independence were the more laudable, as they showed a desire of not proving a burthen to his father, who (tho' a man of tender affections, and of great probity, united to an active and ingenious mind,) conducted a variety of business without securing to himself a just reward of his industry.

Our young adventurer on his arrival in London from the North, in the year 1762, remained for some little time at the inn, where he alighted. But in the course of a few weeks falling accidentally into the society of Mr. Braithwaite, of the Post Office, whose kindness to the young stranger I have had occasion to notice before, he was led by his new conductor to visit the principal works of art in the capital, and its environs, and to settle himself in a lodging near the public residence of his friend.

Here he pursued his profession, painting a head

for the moderate sum of five guineas, and becoming a candidate for the prizes distributed by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Sciences. The first picture, that he exhibited for this purpose, was the death of General Wolfe, and the second prize was assigned to it in 1763; the year, in which the principal prize was conferred on Mr. Pine, for his historical composition representing Canute remarking to his Courtiers his inability to command the waves of the Sea. Some remonstrances were made against the decision, which had allotted the second prize to Romney. Mr. Cumberland says on this occasion— " The decree was reversed, and poor Romney, friendless and unknown, was set aside in favor of a rival better supported; a hardship so obvious, and a partiality so glaring, that the Committee could not face the transaction, but voted him a premium extraordinary, nearly if not quite to the amount of the prize he had been deprived of." If the account of the memorialist were perfectly accurate, the injury done to the young painter in resuming a prize very fairly bestowed on him, would reflect indelible disgrace on this

respectable society. But the candid Romney, in relating this very interesting incident of his life to me, completely absolved those judges of the contest, who gave their final sentence against him. He told me, with that ingenuous spirit, which was one of his amiable characteristics, that Reynolds was the person, who, with great justice, contended, that the second prize of fifty guineas was due to Mortimer for his picture of Edward the Confessor seizing the treasures of his Mother, a picture, which Romney most liberally acknowledged to be so strikingly superior to his own death of Wolfe, that he was far from repining at being obliged to relinquish a prize too hastily assigned to him; and he therefore accepted with lively gratitude a present of twenty-five guineas, which the Committee gave him, not as a compensation for an injury received, but as a free and liberal encouragement to his promising talents. The picture thus honored was afterwards purchased for twenty-five guineas by Mr. Stephenson the banker, who sent it as a present to Governor Varelst in the East Indies, where it had the fortune to decorate the council-chamber at Calcutta.

In the following year the diffident Romney declined a further contest with Mortimer, who obtained the first premium for his picture of Paul preaching to the Britons. My friend was ever willing to render the most liberal justice to the merits of this successful rival, and I mention the name of Mortimer in this work with a mixture of pleasure and of regret; of pleasure, in remembering that he was a native of Sussex, and a man, whom any country might be proud to produce; of regret, in reflecting, that his athletic frame tempted him to indulge himself in violent exercise, which is unfavorable to his profession, and which, in its consequences, precluded this promising genius from attaining that length of days, and that happy maturity of powerful talents, which nature seemed to have intended, that he should reach, and enjoy.

But to return to my principal subject:—In the autumn of 1764, Romney made his first visit to the Continent; not on a settled plan of travel and study;

but in a short excursion of pleasure with one of his early, and most estimable friends, Mr. Thomas Greene of Gray's Inn. The long intercourse, which lasted thro' life between Romney and this gentleman, arose in their boyish days, when it happened, that young Greene was sent to the village school, which Romney, tho' still a boy, had just left for the neighbouring residence of his father. His younger brother continued at the school; and visiting his home every saturday introduced there his new school-fellow, Greene, who soon became intimate with George Romney, and gradually laid the foundation of that permanent friendship, which the great painter himself very justly regarded as no inconsiderable blessing of his fortunate life. It is indeed particularly to be wished, that every mortal, who devotes himself to the deep study of any art, or science, or to the fascinating pursuits of imagination, should have, in some man of business, and integrity, a zealous and confidential friend to protect him from that variety of dangers, and disadvantages, which must arise to him from the nature of his own avocations. If all the followers of fancy may

have occasion for such a support, to Romney it appears to have been peculiarly requisite; for he of all men was most apt to forget, in the fervency of exalted mental pursuits, all the lower concerns of worldly discretion. In his early intimate Mr. Greene, he had the comfort of possessing not only a zealous confident, but a careful attorney, who, in a profession, often supposed to render men keen, and severe, has been universally regarded for chearful indulgent probity, and alert benevolence.

With this friendly companion Romney visited France in September 1764. He travelled by Dunkirk and Lisle to Paris, where he had the advantage of an introduction to his brother artist, the celebrated Vernet, who having attained to great excellence in his favorite study, landscape and marine scenery, had been recalled from Italy by Louis the Fifteenth to paint the sea-ports of France. In the maturity of his talents and reputation, he had at this time apartments in the Louvre, where he received the young English

artist with that gay and attentive civility, which is eager to anticipate all the wishes of a stranger. He obtained for his visiter free access to the Orleans collection of pictures, to which Romney now devoted much of his attention, and which, in the later periods of his life, he seized opportunities of reviewing with an encrease of delight. In his first survey of Paris he judiciously allowed himself time enough to examine all the renowned works of art, not only in that city, but in the neighbouring palaces; and of all he contemplated, no pictures contributed more to his own immediate improvement as a portrait-painter, than that bold and rich production of Rubens, the Luxemburgh Gallery.

After a delightful and improving excursion of six weeks, he resumed again in London the labors of his profession. By the kind advice of his friend Greene, he had removed from the city to the more airy situation of Gray's Inn, where he had soon the gratification of painting a very amiable and eminent character, Sir Joseph Yates, in his robes as a Judge of the King's Bench. The features and manners of

this excellent man very happily expressed what he really was, a model for an English magistrate, distinguished by mild intelligence united to artless and fearless integrity. The early success of Romney, in portraying more than one eminent lawyer, seems to have rendered him a favorite with the gentlemen of the law. He has certainly executed many admirable portraits from illustrious individuals of this profession, a profession which has a tendency perhaps to animate with peculiar vivacity the natural eloquence of manly features.

The encrease of his occupation as a portrait-painter did not induce Romney, on his return from France, to neglect his favorite study, historical composition. In the spring of 1765 he exhibited his picture on the Death of King Edmund, and obtained from the Society for the Encouragement of Arts and Sciences the second prize of fifty guineas. The first, of sixty, was assigned in this year to Mr. H. Hamilton for his picture of the British Queen Boadicea, and her Daughters. Romney appeared at another exhi-

bition in the same year 1765. He contributed to the catalogue in Maiden Lane two pictures, the portrait of a gentleman, and a lady's head in the character of a saint. He exhibited again with the same society of artists the following year 1766; a single portrait of a gentleman, and a conversation. In 1767 he exhibited in Pall Mall a single picture containing the portraits of two sisters half length. In the interval between this exhibition, and that of the following year, he quitted his residence in Gray's Inn, and he is described in the catalogue of 1768, as residing at the Golden Head in Great Newport Street; a street endeared to the lovers of art by having been inhabited, during several years, by two great rivals in public favor, Romney, and Reynolds. The latter had the start of his younger antagonist by ten years, as there is that difference between the periods, when each of these successful painters settled in London: yet a season arrived, when to use an expression of Lord Thurlow, " The Town was divided between Reynolds and Romney;"—but I return to the early works of

my friend. In 1769 he exhibited in Pall Mall two whole length pictures of ladies, and a family piece.

The latter is probably the picture, which a very intelligent and sincere friend of Romney's described to me as an early source of the painter's popularity, and of his own intimacy with him.—" I was induced to seek, and cultivate his acquaintance (said the gentleman I allude to) by a picture, that he exhibited of Sir George Warren with his lady, and a little girl caressing a bullfinch, that sits on her hand. The truth, nature, and tenderness, in this picture had, I believe, a great influence in making him a popular artist." The year 1770 was still more propitious to his rising reputation: in that year he exhibited, in Spring Garden, his two whole length figures of Mirth and Melancholy. These two pictures attracted great notice on their first appearance. They are now (1803) in the possession of Lord Bolton. In 1771 he exhibited also in Spring Garden, his whole length portrait of Mrs. Yates, in the character of the Tragic Muse. I have often wished that it had been the lot of

Romney to paint this great actress, one of the most gracefully majestic of our tragic queens, at a maturer season of his life, and in the full meridian of his powers, for in that case I am persuaded the Tragic Muse of Romney would not have appeared what at present I must allow her to be, very far inferior, as a work of the pencil, to the Tragic Muse of Sir Joshua.

Tho' our young artist was continually improving, and his resemblances were eminently strong; yet it must be owned, before he visited Italy, his pictures discover the defects arising from a want of studious familiarity with the great models of his art: his portraits were often hard, cold, and heavy. There was however great merit in his picture of his friend Major Pearson; an officer in the India service, conversing with a Bramin; it was exhibited in 1771. He painted at the same time a Madonna and child for this gentleman, who was a soldier of an elegant and highly cultivated mind, peculiarly fond of antient English literature, and so endeared to Romney, that the seal, he generally used, was an engraved head of the Major.

The gentleman, to whose earlier intimacy with our friend I am indebted for some particulars of his history, described Romney at this period of his life with such affectionate animation, that it would be an injury to friendship, if I failed to insert in this memoir the very words of his description; especially as his opinions of the painter are the more entitled to regard from his having himself received the regular education of an artist.

" It was during his residence in Newport Street, said my instructor, that Romney formed the noble design of quitting England for the sole purpose of improving himself in the principles and practice of his beloved art, and it will add greatly to his honor, if it is known, that he quitted England at a time, when, by the efforts of resolute and unremitted industry alone, struggling under every disadvantage, he had raised his professional income to no less a sum than twelve hundred a year. When I contemplate Romney in this point of view, when I see him after having

surmounted the want of particular patronage, and all the difficulties of narrow and embarrassed circumstances, so boldly quitting that affluence, and reputation, which he had created for himself, and quitting them for the sole purpose of improvement, I cannot but admire him beyond all the men I have ever known, either in, or out, of art. The event proved that the noble confidence he placed in his own persevering spirit, did not deceive him. In the course of his Italian studies, his manner of painting was improved beyond measure; his pictures, instead of being cold and heavy, became warm, tender, light, and beautiful."

Such were the remarks of a sincere and a judicious friend, who had studied both the mind and the works of Romney, at different periods, with encreasing regard, and admiration. But it is time for his biographer to recollect, that he has yet to record the circumstances of his Italian excursion.

He formed a social plan of foreign travel with a professional brother, Mr. Humphry, who has dis-

tinguished himself in different branches of art. I believe a portrait of his fellow-traveller was one of the last works executed by Romney, before he set forth to visit Rome. This portrait, and another of an old man, appeared at the exhibition near Exeter Change in the year 1772, and these, as that accurate and obliging instructor, Mr. Isaac Reed, informed me, are the last traces, that can be found, of Romney's exhibiting.

The following incidents of his journey to Rome were kindly imparted to me by a friend of his fellow-traveller.—The two artists left London on the 20th of March, 1773; they passed their first night at Seven Oaks in Kent, for the sake of devoting the next day to a survey of Knowle, a seat embellished with many interesting works of art, where Mr. Humphry had the gratification of finding a patron, and a friend, in the late Duke of Dorset. With him the travellers passed a day of pleasure, and proceeded the next morning to Dover.

They reached Calais on Lady-day, and hastened to Paris. To this city and its environs they devoted three weeks, residing at the hotel de York; and daily directing their attention to every thing most worthy of notice in painting, sculpture, and architecture. From Paris they proceeded to Lyons, and were detained there a fortnight by Romney's indisposition. On his recovery they fell down the Rhone to Pont St. Esprit. Landing there they amused themselves with the antiquities of Nismes; then advanced to Avignon, and proceeded thro' Aix to Marseilles. The travellers were satisfied with passing a single week in this city, more famous for its early history, and for the Christian heroism of its good bishop, during the plague, than for possessing any treasures of art. They passed on by land, thro' Frejus and Antibes, to Nice. After being detained for some weeks, partly by contrary winds, and partly by the pleasures of society, in a scene of singular beauty, they embarked in a felucca for Genoa, with a Mr. Aubert, a Genoese merchant of an English family, and a gentleman of a most kind and hospitable spirit. To his benevolence the travellers

were most agreeably indebted; and as the churches and palaces of Genoa were, at that time, enriched with pictures of exquisite beauty, every thing conspired to make their abode in this illustrious city peculiarly delightful.

But great delights are commonly followed by troubles, or alarms, of equal magnitude: In their passage from Genoa the travelling artists were driven, in a felucca, by a violent storm thro' the gulph of Pisa. The danger was imminent; the crew vehemently alarmed; Romney appeared to sit in silent consternation; but when his companion, whose spirits were less affected, rallied him a little on his gravity, he protested it did not arise from personal fear, but from tender concern at the prospect of being suddenly separated for ever from his friends and relations. His companion has liberally observed, that the truth of this protestation was evinced by Romney's subsequent behaviour, after their safe arrival at Leghorn; for when his fellow-traveller proposed, for the sake of expedition, to proceed again by water to Civita

Vecchia, or Ostia at the mouth of the Tiber, Romney, undaunted by their recent peril, very willingly acquiesced in the plan; but as delays would have been created by the laws of the port, and the necessity of waiting for a bill of health, after admiring the colossal slaves by John of Bologna, on the quay of Leghorn, they resolved to proceed by land thro' Pisa and Florence.

After having examined in Pisa the early works of the venerable Giotto, and other old masters, they travelled thro' the vale of Arno to Florence. "Our raptures in this enchanting region were indescribably great (says the fellow-traveller of Romney, to whom I am obliged for the particulars of their journey) and scarcely exceeded upon our arrival in that most beautiful of cities, the cradle of our art."

The travellers, who were both animated with lively enthusiasm for the grand object of their pursuit, and eager to reach Rome, allowed themselves but a few days for contemplating the numerous objects of

delightful study, that Florence had then to boast. They quitted these with regret, and passing on thro' Sienna and Viterbo, arrived in Rome on the 18th of June. Romney now devoted himself to intense and sequestered study. Such was the cautious reserve, which his singular mental infirmity, a perpetual dread of enemies, inspired, that he avoided all farther intercourse with his fellow-traveller, and with all the other artists of his country, who were then studying at Rome. Yet he failed not to acquaint himself with their professional conduct; for I recollect his having repeatedly lamented that our amiable friend Wright, the painter of Derby, had laid the foundation of those cruel nervous sufferings, which afflicted his latter years, by excess of application during his residence in Rome. Romney was but too well qualified to make such an observation, for he was himself very singularly addicted to that honorable, yet perilous, kind of intemperance, the intemperance of study! and I impute those deplorable infirmities, that over-clouded the evening of his day, to his great want of that self-command, which should have led him in

regulating his own studies (both of early and of maturer life) to establish the proper salutary intervals of labour and of rest. His powerful, and imperious, fancy precluded him from the advantages of such useful discretion.

In the memoranda, which my friend desired me to preserve as a foundation for a history of his professional pursuits, it surprizes me to find no list of the works that he executed at Rome. Recollection is so imperfect a chronicler of labours long past, that I earnestly exhort every young artist, who "means to be of note," to "begin betimes" to enter in a constant diary his work of every day. In youth it may serve him as an incentive to regularity of application, and in age it may gratify him with a clear and useful retrospect of honorable exertions. The ardor and activity of Romney, at this period of his life, were so great, and so incessant, that I am persuaded he must have executed many drawings and paintings during his residence at Rome, but my own memory, and that of his surviving relations can only enable me to spe-

cify three, namely two portraits painted as studies to shew the peculiar strength of character in Italian features, and a large copy in chiaro oscuro from the lower half of Raphael's Transfiguration; the portraits were painted from men of the populace—one represented a Roman dwarf, called Baiocco, from his being used to beg for Baiocci halfpence. This head has a beard and black hair; the original struck the fancy of Romney as a fit model for the character of Brutus. The other portrait displayed a keen countenance with handsome features, but rather effeminate; it was drawn from an unhappy mortal, whom the painter called a profest assassin. It may be added that Romney also painted with great diligence at Rome from a female model, whom he hired occasionally, and of whom he is only remembered to have said, that her figure was remarkably fine, and her modesty and discretion so great, that he never beheld her except in the presence of her mother. Whether he brought to England any of the pictures, that he painted from this model, or disposed of them abroad, it is now too late to enquire.

Before I cease to speak of my friend's application to his art in his travels, it is incumbent on me to mention an anecdote, which I received from his brother Colonel Romney, especially as it reflects honor on two of our artists, and upon one of our departed princes. When Romney and his fellow-traveller were preparing for their excursion to Rome, the late Duke of Gloucester was so pleased with their spirit in foregoing all the advantages of eminence, and emolument, to which they had laboriously raised themselves in their profession at home, for the purpose of acquiring improvement in the great schools of Italy, that he gave them a letter of recommendation to the Pope, which procured for Romney the permission to erect scaffolds in the Vatican. If Rome was a scene of honor to Romney, it was also a scene of alarm; for as he happened to lodge in the Jesuit's College, he was arrested among the Jesuits, who were seized by an order from his Holiness. The incident however afforded him the gratification of knowing in what high esteem his countrymen were held; for on his declaring himself an Englishman, he was immediately released.

After a busy residence of many months at Rome, Romney indulged himself with a survey of Venice, and he chanced to meet there an eccentric character of his own country, with whose singularities he was highly entertained. The learned and fanciful traveller, Wortley Montague, after his rambles in Asia, was at this time living in Venice with the manners, the habit, and the magnificence of a Turk. Romney painted an admirable head of him in his Eastern garb, and in such a style of art, as clearly proves, that the painter had studied intensely, and successfully, the celebrated colourists of the Venetian School. Indeed his head of Montague might easily be mistaken for a Venetian picture. It was a favorite work of the artist, and he long retained it as a study for his own use, but after permitting a small print to be taken from it as a decoration to Seward's Anecdotes, he presented the original to a friend. He had painted a large copy from it, which, with other exquisite portraits by the same master, is ranked among the choicest modern ornaments of that magnificent and interesting old mansion, Warwick Castle.

Romney was so captivated with the extensive knowledge, the lively spirit, and the fascinating conversation, of Wortley Montague, and that extraordinary traveller was so pleased with the manual and mental energy of the artist, that it is probable their acquaintance might have led to the production of many pictures, had not their brief intimacy ended by a fatal mischance, which terminated all the projects of Montague. While Romney was with him, he happened, in eating a small bird, to wound his throat with a bone: the accident produced inflammation, and in the course of a few days occasioned his death. Such was the fate of this singular man, who had escaped from the manifold perils of roving thro' the deserts of the East.

Romney, before he returned to his own country, devoted some time to Parma, where he was charmed with the works of Corregio, a painter whom he particularly admired, and whose tenderness and grace he often emulated very happily in his figures of women and children.

Returning by Turin, Lyons, and Paris, he reached London in the beginning of July, 1775. He resided for a few months in Gray's Inn, but a spacious house in Cavendish Square becoming vacant by the death of Coates, an eminent painter in crayons, Romney was persuaded by his friends to settle himself in that seasonable, and fortunate abode. While I am recalling to my memory a mansion, where I have passed so many pleasant, and social hours, in witnessing, and promoting, the studies of an artist, whom I loved most cordially, I cannot fail to think of the scene with tenderness, and good wishes. I have a pleasure in knowing, it is now inhabited by an artist, who has distinguished himself by alternate application to the pencil, and the lyre. I have read with great pleasure Rhymes of Art, by Mr. Shee, and altho' my long retirement from London has not allowed me the gratification of admiring his pictures, I cannot recollect his residence without exclaiming " Stet Fortuna Domus!" May the house he inhabits long be the mansion of active talents, of prosperity, and renown!

It was at Christmas, in the year 1775, that Romney took possession of this memorable residence. He was then in the very prime of life; his health had been improved, and his mind enriched, by two years of foreign study; and he had the active good wishes of several friends in his favor. Yet in his singular constitution there was so much nervous timidity, united to great bodily strength, and to enterprising, and indefatigable ambition, that he used to tremble, when he waked every morning in his new habitation, with a painful apprehension of not finding business sufficient to support him. These fears were only early flutterings of that incipient hypochondriacal disorder, which preyed in secret on his comfort during many years; and which, tho' apparently subdued by the cheering exhortations of friendship, and great professional prosperity, failed not to shew itself more formidably, when he was exhausted by labor, in the decline of life.

On his first settling in Cavendish Square, his friends were kindly anxious to promote his restora-

tion to that full employment, which he had quitted so honorably for the purpose of enabling himself to reach higher excellence in art. He was much gratified in having the late Duke of Richmond among the first, if not the very first of his sitters after his return from Italy. His earliest portrait of that nobleman was a happy specimen of the improving artist, and the Duke expressed a kind solicitude to promote his professional prosperity, but never honored him with any magnificent commission. The return of Romney to England was announced to the public by the benevolent zeal of Mr. Cumberland, who publishing two Odes, in 1776, inscribed them to the painter with such a friendly address, as might be reasonably expected to serve him by introducing the travelled artist to the notice of his country. Having some painful occasions to speak of Mr. Cumberland in this work with censure (that I could not suppress without being deficient in duty to my departed friend) I gladly seize opportunities of doing ample justice to the merits of that gentleman in all points, where his conduct towards Romney appears to me meritorious. I hasten therefore

to insert in this place the delicate verses, by which Mr. Cumberland endeavoured to conciliate for an artist, who was still a novice in the world, the favor of the public. The verses were printed in a newspaper soon after Romney's return from the Continent; and as Gibbon politely said of the subsequent poetical Epistles addrest to the same artist, " if they did not contribute much to his professional prosperity, they may be justly called an elegant advertisement of his merit." Mr. Cumberland has properly inserted the whole composition in that very entertaining miscellany his own memoirs, but he does not assign any exact date to the verses, and as they speak of Coates as a living artist, they were probably written before Romney's excursion to Italy; at all events the concluding lines, which alone relate to my friend, breathe a spirit of benevolence, and are a pleasing proof, that the chief object of the poet was to serve, encourage, and honor, the very diffident painter.

" *Apart, and bending o'er the azure tide,*
With heavenly contemplation by his side,

A pensive artist stands, in thoughtful mood;
With downcast looks he eyes the ebbing flood.
No wild ambition swells his temperate heart;
Himself as pure, and patient, as his art.
Nor sullen sorrow, nor intemperate joy,
The even tenor of his thoughts destroy,
An undistinguish'd candidate for fame,
At once his country's glory, and its shame!
Rouse then at length, with honest pride inspir'd,
Romney advance! be known, and be admir'd!"

The author of these verses had evidently a very kind intention in writing them, but he seems not to have perceived, at this time, that Romney, with all his diffidence and timidity had an ardent, active, and impetuous mind.

As I have now reached the period, when my own intimacy commenced with my memorable friend, I trust that no candid reader will censure me for impertinent egotism, if I mention a circumstance of my own

early life, which probably had great influence in cementing my long and cordial attachment to this admirable artist: I mean the circumstance of my having devoted a great portion of time, in my juvenile days, to the constant exercise of the pencil.

I happened, when I was preparing to reside, for the first time, at Cambridge, to be acquainted with Mr. Steevens, who was afterwards distinguished as an editor of Shakespeare. He had then taken leave of the university to which I was going, where he had not only rendered himself an excellent scholar, but had also acquired the accomplishment of drawing with precision, delicacy, and spirit.

Perceiving that I sometimes amused myself with a pencil, he advised me on my arrival in college, to engage a drawing master, whom he justly recommended as a man, not only ingenious, and diligent, but endeared to all who knew him, by singular simplicity, and benevolence. Under this pleasant instructor, Mr. Bretherton, I drew both landscape and

figures from nature, and life; nor deserted my master, tho' my friendship with Meyer the eminent painter in miniature, soon enabled me to surpass, and instruct my first teacher in the management of water-colours. To these I confined my ambition; but having in the course of three or four years, executed many drawings, and some pictures on ivory from Titian, Corregio, Raphael, &c. I was inclined to exclaim with the natural temerity of youth, " E son pittore anch' io."—"Even I am a painter." Tho' to speak honestly, my exultation on such performances was like the exultation of a child, who fancies himself a great gardener, as soon as he has transplanted a few diminutive flowers. Literature however was my predominant passion, and I resolved to devote only such time to the pencil, as would enable me, as I advanced in life, to form a collection of miniature portraits by my own hand of my particular friends. But I was precluded from realizing a vision so delightful by a severe mischance. In going with my friend Meyer in May 1772 to visit the celebrated Captain Cooke on board his

ship, the Resolution, then lying in the river, and prepared for her voyage, we were exposed, in an open boat, to a bitter easterly wind, which proved to me a source of long suffering, by a violent and obstinate inflammation of the eyes. This cruel malady obliged me to renounce the pencil; and I do not recollect, that I ever resumed it, except once in Derbyshire, where I was tempted to copy two bold sketches in water-colours of the scenery about Matlock, that were kindly lent to me by my friend Wright, the excellent painter of Derby. But the delight, that I had taken in the art, which I was so painfully forced to relinquish, made me peculiarly desirous of cultivating the friendship of its more successful professors. In the year 1776, when I was furnishing the little villa in Sussex, to which I had retired, I wished to adorn it with good portraits, as large as life, of a few friends from whose frequent society I precluded myself, in a great measure, by relinquishing my residence in London. Meyer on this occasion introduced me to Romney, as an artist, of whose rising talents he had the highest opinion. Romney had a friend in Meyer sin-

gularly fervent and sincere, highly able to estimate, and even to foresee his rare powers, and equally zealous to recommend him, let me therefore devote a few words to the memory of this excellent person, who as a painter was himself at the head of his profession in his line of art, and no less admirable as a friend; endeared to all who knew him by a pleasant social vivacity, and by an indefatigable spirit of extensive beneficence. Were I required to name the individual whom I believe to have been most instrumental in promoting the prosperity of others (without the advantages of official authority, or of opulence) I should say, without hesitation, Meyer. He was born 1735, at Tubingen in the Dutchy of Wirtemberg; he came to England in 1749 with his father, who was portrait painter to the Duke of Wirtemberg. The younger Meyer studied two years, 1757 and 1758, under Zink, an eminent painter in enamel, to whom he paid two hundred pounds for instruction, and two hundred more for materials of his art. He was naturalized by act of parliament 1762, and in the following year he married a lady of a respectable fortune, who to the

accomplishments of drawing, and of music, added those brilliant and solid virtues, that enliven, and dignify, every season of life. This lady possesses in a portrait of her only surviving son perhaps the most elaborately finished picture in water-colours, that the world can exhibit. It was painted by my departed friend, when his son William was about the age of ten; the affection of the father enabled the artist to support a singular contest with nature, by trying the utmost, that time, and patience, could achieve in the high finishing of a portrait. Intense labour has seldom produced such felicity of effect. Meyer in 1764 was appointed painter in enamel to his present Majesty. He had belonged to the society in St. Martin's Lane, supported by a subscription of artists, and when the King was graciously pleased to institute a Royal Academy, he was one of the most active, and most respected, of its earliest members. Of his zeal for the honor of that institution, and his wish to persuade Romney to devote his talents to that national object, I shall have future occasion to speak, and now therefore return to the

season, when my acquaintance commenced with the principal subject of this memorial.

The first work, that Romney executed for me, was a portrait of Mr. Long, a gentleman, to whom nature had given extraordinary talents for the pencil. I am confident that my friend would have greatly distinguished himself in painting and in architecture, had he not been precluded from pursuing them by his profession of surgery, an art, that allows to its professors no vacation; an art, whose pains and troubles would be almost intolerable, if they were not compensated by the benevolent hope of affording the most important relief to suffering humanity.

Romney, while he was painting the portraits of Mr. Long, and Mr. Thornton, with another of myself, not only pleased us as an artist, but displayed such endearing qualities as a companion, that we all became attached to him most cordially for life—brief alas! was the portion of life allotted to one of his new

friends. Mr. Thornton, who had been one of my most intimate fellow-students in Cambridge, and was, at this time, rising to eminence in the law, died, before the painter could execute some finishing touches, that he intended to bestow upon his very interesting portrait, which had attained such a degree of excellence, that, unfinished as it is, I regard it as singularly complete in the highest charm of portraiture, I mean in the perfect expression of an amiable character. It is an image, that even strangers contemplate with pleasure, as a model of pensive benevolence. So uncertain are the issues of human life, that when this picture was begun, I was much more alarmed for the health of the painter, than of the friend, whom we were destined to lose so soon.

In the first year of my acquaintance with Romney, I observed, that with admirable faculties for attaining excellence in his art, he had some peculiarities, that threatened to impede his progress; and that he would frequently want the counsel of a frank and faithful monitor, to guard him against those excesses of im-

petuous and undisciplined imagination, which often lead the fervent votaries of fame to destroy their own powers by intemperance in study. The first invitation that I sent him to visit my retirement, contained, both in prose and verse, a long and friendly remonstrance against his want of proper attention to his own health. I will transcribe from it a passage, that may serve to shew the very ardent character of my friend at this period, and the early interest that I took in his prosperity and renown.

Eartham 1776.

" I entreat you in the name of those immortal powers, the beautiful, and the sublime, whom you so ardently adore, or, to speak the language of your favorite Macbeth, " *I conjure you by that which you profess,*" to moderate your intense spirit of application, which preys so fatally on your frame—exchange, for a short time, the busy scenes,

and noxious air, of London, for the chearful tranquillity and pure breezes of our Southern coast.

" To console you for what you will quit, the daily praises of a flattering Metropolis, I will promise you the more silent, but warmer, admiration of a few friends, who join to their esteem of your talents, the most cordial solicitude for your welfare. Nor is this an idle invitation to abandon, even for a short time, either the pleasures, or profits, of your profession; but to pursue both in a manner more consistent with your health, and consequently with that glory in your art, which is, I know, your predominant passion, and which is indeed the only true Promethean fire that can make an artist immortal.

" *But vain this vital spark of heavenly flame,*
If toil excessive tears the shatter'd frame:
Where languid Sickness spreads her sullen shade,
Imagination's brilliant figures fade:
O'er Fancy's canvas then no Psyches rove,
The pregnant mind brings forth no infant Jove,

But forms of Spleen, and shapes more dark to view,
Than Rembrandt colour'd, or Salvator drew.

" Do not so much injure the art you love, as to reduce yourself to such a situation! but let us hope, that some one may say of you, in advanced life, what was said in a letter to Titian, by one of his friends—" Certo che il pennel vostro ha riserbati i suoi miracoli nella Maturita della vecchiezza"—"Your pencil has certainly reserved its most wonderful works for the maturity of old age." But if you really wish (I do not say to live, because you seem not to value life) but to paint, half so long as Titian, you must absolutely give yourself time to breathe a little, now and then, out of the thick air of London. Here are three divinities, Health, Gaiety, and Friendship, that invite you very eagerly to this pleasant retreat, &c."

This invitation was so successful, that it induced the tender artist not only to visit Eartham speedily, but to pass with me a few weeks every autumn, for

more than twenty years, on that favorite spot. He used generally to arrive much exhausted by his professional labor in London; but the bracing air of a healthy village, and that best medicine of life, sympathetic friendship, so rapidly produced their beneficial effects, that Romney, after a day or two of absolute rest, usually regained all the native energy of his mind; and displayed an eagerness for extensive enterprize in that province of his art, which peculiarly belongs to imagination. On these occasions our social hours were devoted to what a foreign philosopher (the benevolent and singularly fanciful Helvetius) when he enjoyed the society of a studious friend, used pleasantly to call "*The chace of Ideas.*" My particular friends of the pencil, Meyer, Romney, and Wright of Derby, were all inclined to give me much more credit for intelligence in the theory of painting than I deserved; Wright and Romney especially, who thought I had a facility in selecting, or inventing, new and happy subjects for the pencil, were in the habit of inviting me to *this chace of ideas.* Whenever Romney was my guest, I was glad to put

aside my own immediate occupation, whatever it chanced to be, for the pleasure of searching for, and presenting to him, a copious choice of such subjects, as might happily exercise his powers. I have often blamed myself for not preserving some memoranda of the infinite number of sketches, that my active and rapid friend used to make in his autumnal visits to Eartham: several were on canvas in colours; but the greater number executed very hastily on paper with a pen. His eagerness in multiplying, and collecting these, was extreme; and we were both anxious, that they should attend him on his return to London, because most of them were little more than hasty hints intended to form the ground work of maturer studies in the approaching winter; but every winter brought so much new occupation for the pencil in its train, that I believe the sketches of the autumn were often suffered to sleep in oblivion. I regret therefore not only that I made no list of his more promising sketches, but that I failed also to preserve his letters during the first eight or nine years of our epistolary intercourse. Some letters of

a later date will appear in the course of this work, and they display his feelings so forcibly, that I think they cannot fail to interest the reader, even when they do not expressly describe the productions of his pencil. I wish I had the power to give a most faithful account of these from my own memory, but most men, who attempt to be historians from memory alone, will find, I believe, abundant cause for correcting their own narrative, if they acquire an opportunity of comparing it with written documents. In the first years of my intimacy with Romney, we formed many social projects of uniting poetry and design, in works, that were never accomplished. Of some my recollection can discover no distinct vestiges; of others but a few trivial remains. I find however some verses, which remind me that we talked of producing a joint work on the adventures of Cupid and Psyche, from Apuleius. On this idea my friend drew no less than eight elegant cartoons in black chalk: I meant to finish a poem on the subject in emulation of Dryden's delightful fables, but if my memory does not deceive me, I speedily threw it aside for the sake of devoting

my attention to a work, that I hoped to render more conducive to the professional honor of my friend—I mean my Epistles to Romney, written in 1777, and first printed in the following year.

The main object of this poem was to encourage the just ambition of the painter; to persuade him not to waste too large a portion of life in the lucrative drudgery of his profession; but to aspire to the acquisition of practical excellence in the highest department of his art. After contemplating the character of my friend in his season of energy, and in his period of decline, after admiring several works, that he completed, and after regretting the failure of many more, which he projected, and partly advanced, but never found leisure or strength to accomplish, I am still persuaded that the fervency of friendship did not speak of him too highly in the following lines.

" *Nature in thee her every gift combin'd,*
Which forms the artist of the noblest kind;
That fond ambition, which bestows on art
Each talent of the mind, and passion of the heart.

That dauntless patience, which all toil defies,
Nor feels the labor, while it views the prize.
Enlight'ning study with maturing power,
From these fair seeds has call'd the op'ning flow'r."

The painter, from whose hand these verses might have induced his country to expect very signal achievements in his art, continued to live and to paint many years after the poetical Epistles addrest to him were first printed; and it must be owned, that he has closed his labors, and his life, without bequeathing to public admiration such a series of historical pictures, as seem to be anticipated by the sanguine presages of a poetical friend in his favor. How it happened, that the number of Romney's greater works has been very far from corresponding with his own magnificent intentions, the sequel of this narrative may shew, as it will be my endeavour to render it, what I know he wished it to prove, not only a faithful memorial of his industry, but useful to future artists by informing them what he did, and what he failed to do; that it may excite them to plan betimes, and to persevere in

resolute, and well-concerted plans for reaching the highest excellence, which their respective powers may enable them to attain. It may be suggested probably with truth, that no mortal ever made the best, and most complete possible use of all the talents, and all the time, that Heaven had given him for the cultivation, and improvement, of any art. Such an observation may perhaps be just, even when applied to the two most studious, and high-minded artists, who are thought to have breathed a new soul into painting, I mean Michael Angelo and Raphael. To Romney it is applicable in no common degree. Those, who knew him intimately, know, what faculties he possessed for the attainment of excellence in the highest province of art; and they have often lamented that the number, and magnitude, of his historical works must appear so very inadequate, not only to his mental powers, but to his passion for glory, and to the infinite number of hours, that he devoted to the manual exercise of art. It may be useful to students of similar industry, and similar ambition, to develop the

various causes, why Romney did not accomplish his own wishes, and those of his friends, by producing many finished works of imagination: for to speak in the phrase of old Polonius, "*this effect defective comes by cause;*" and the enemies of my friend have imputed it to two causes equally false: first to avarice, which confined him to portraits; and secondly to a deficiency of talent for works of invention:—but it is an honest truth, that Romney loved honor infinitely more than gold; and had received from nature a most creative fancy; but it must be confest, that he had never completely counteracted one defect in his early education as a painter: he had not thoroughly acquired that mastery in anatomical science, which should enable a great inventive artist to draw the human figure, in all its variations of attitude, with ease and truth, and consequently with delight to himself. It is perhaps a general infirmity in our nature, that man loves to employ himself chiefly in what he can perform with the greatest ease and success. Romney had painted faces so incessantly, and painted them so well, that to paint a new face became one of his pe-

culiar delights. He delighted no less in sketching scenes from fancy; and his invention had all the rapidity, and exuberance, of genius; but he did not equally love the less amusing labor, by which a figure rapidly invented must be slowly ripened into an accurate perfection of form. Hence he produced innumerable portraits, and an astonishing multitude of sketches from fancy; but the hours he devoted to each of these favorite occupations left him not time sufficient to produce many such works of studied invention, as he most wished, and intended to execute in the autumn of life. One of his designs from fancy, drawn soon after his return from the Continent, and giving a very high idea of his creative powers, was a cartoon of black chalk, representing a Lapland witch surveying the sea from a rock, and enjoying the distress of mariners from a tempest of her own creation. Meyer used to contemplate this figure with the highest delight, admiring the felicity of the artist in preserving the beauty of fine female features, and in rendering the expression of the countenance sublimely

malignant. I have mentioned this design in the poetical Epistles addrest to Romney, and had hoped to decorate this volume with a good engraving from the cartoon, which the son of my departed friend had kindly intended to present to me, but after a diligent search for it in a mass of many large works, that were huddled together in the haste of the retiring painter to clear his London house, we had the mortification to perceive, that some mischance had annihilated this favorite design. In its stead I have substituted an engraving from a later sketch of Romney, in oil, representing a scene of heroic benevolence. I mean the horseman at the Cape of Good Hope rescuing from the sea the sufferers in a shipwreck. The humane achievements, and the disastrous fate, of this compassionate mortal, whose name was Woltemad, are recorded in the travels of Thunberg; and the subject was recommended to the painter by the Revd. James Clarke, the biographer of Lord Nelson.

The native tenderness of Romney's mind led him to take a peculiar delight in examples of compas-



A Sketch of a Shipwreck after Vernet

sionate magnanimity; and his animated tho' unfinished sketch of this interesting adventure is endeared to me as a gift from the kindness of his son.

In sending me the sketch, he mentioned an example of similar heroism in an humble character of this island. The anecdote is so honorable to humanity that I am persuaded I shall gratify my readers by transcribing the narrative of my friend.

" Since I wrote the enclosed letter I have been informed from good authority that there is now living on the coast of Lancashire, somewhere between the mouth of the Ribble and the town of Liverpool, a man who with the aid of his horse has been instrumental in rescuing several persons from shipwreck, and in one instance he saved three out of fifteen from a watery grave. The horse as if sensible of the important service, and well practised in the business, plunges boldly thro' the foaming breakers, and both disappear for some seconds. They emerge together, the man firmly keeping his seat, and united

like a Centaur, perform their offices of humanity. Had my father known this circumstance, he would, no doubt, have celebrated his own countryman in preference to an inhabitant of the Cape. That the impulse of humanity should suggest the same means, and find in each case an instrument so obedient, is very remarkable."

An occasion to mention the sketch of a subject so memorable, has tempted me to deviate from the chronological order that I wish to observe. In reverting to the earlier years of my intimacy with the artist, I find some pleasing memorials of his occupation, and his kindness in 1780. He gratified me particularly, in that year, by shewing the versatility of his talents; for he finished an admirable drawing in water-colours of his friends at Eartham, and also a strong resemblance of himself, which the reader will see engraved in the trio of his own portraits, and marked with the year of his age, forty-six. Let me also record another small production of his pencil, in the year 1780, which was equally the offspring of

friendship. I mean a sketch intended as a decoration for the Ode, which I addrest to that hero of humanity, Howard, the visiter of prisons! The design was engraved by Bartolozzi, and annexed to the poem. The sentiment, which the drawing expressed, was pleasing to that most benevolent of men, tho' it contained no exact resemblance of his figure; and I felt not a little gratified in observing, when I passed a few social hours with him in London, that he had the design of my friend, neatly copied on vellum, as an exterior ornament to one of his own quarto volumes, which he had prepared for presentation.

It was a favorite object of Romney's ambition to paint, not merely a single portrait, but a series of pictures, to express his veneration for the character of Howard; and to display the variety of relief, that his signal benevolence afforded to the sufferings of the wretched. The several endearing proofs of friendship, with which I was favored by that beneficent traveller, induced me to hope, that I should overcome his reluctance to sit for his portrait, and con-

duct him to the painting-room of my friend. I tried every expedient for this purpose, while I could hope to gain it, either by my own influence with the great philanthropist, or by that of others. The importunity, with which he was solicited on this subject, gave rise to a singular scene: A fervent admirer of Romney's, who was intimate with Howard, happened to breakfast with him in Town on his arrival from the Continent; the liberal traveller presented to his guest some prints, that he had just brought from Holland, and entertained him with a display of various articles, which he had collected in his travels; among them was a new dress made in Saxony; it was a sort of great coat, yet graceful in its appearance, and ornamented with sober magnificence. His visiter exclaimed: "This is the robe, in which you should be painted by Romney; I will implore the favor on my knees, if you will let me array you in this very picturesque habiliment, and convey you instantly in a coach to Cavendish Square." — "O fie! (replied Howard, in the mildest tone of his gentle voice) O fie! I did not kneel to the Emperor."—"And, I assure

you (said the petitioner in answer to the tender reproof) I would never kneel to you, if you were not above an emperor in my estimation." The philanthropist was touched by the cordial eulogy, but continued firm in his resolution of not granting his portrait to all the repeated requests of importunate affection. He had the goodness however to mention several scenes, of which he had been a spectator in foreign prisons, that he thought most suited to exercise the talents of a great moral painter. Many hints of this kind were imparted to Romney; and his intentions to build extensive works upon them will probably appear in the course of this narrative.

In the autumn of 1782 he had the pleasure of meeting at Eartham, the poetess of Litchfield, Miss Seward, a lady whom he greatly admired for her poetical talents, for the sprightly charms of her social character, and for the graces of a majestic person. He was much affected by her filial tenderness, when she spoke of her aged father, and in his zeal to

gratify the good old man with a resemblance of his accomplished daughter, he began, in Sussex, a successful portrait of this admirable lady, which he completed in London. Romney had one characteristic as an artist, for which it is hardly possible to honor his memory too much: He never seemed so happy, as when his pencil was employed in the service of the benevolent affections. His fervent spirit was more eager to oblige a friend, or to gratify a parent, than to exert itself in the pursuit of affluence, or fame. I shall notice several proofs of such endearing benevolence in the course of this memorial. In the beginning of the following year, 1783, he painted for me another friend of high literary distinction—the great Roman historian. I had the pleasure of introducing Gibbon to Romney, and of seeing that they were greatly pleased with each other. I hardly remember a day spent in London with higher social entertainment than one that we passed together in Bentink Street, where our host enchanted us by the good-natured wit, and instructive vivacity of his conversation. In some parts of the half length por-

trait of the historian, the painter was singularly happy, but in some parts he failed. The countenance is exquisitely painted; delicately exact in resemblance and truth of character. In some points this portrait may be justly preferred to another of the same personage (in the possession of his friend Lord Sheffield) by Sir Joshua Reynolds, because it approaches still nearer to life, and exhibits more faithfully the social spirit of Gibbon; but the subordinate parts of the picture I am praising are very far from being entitled to praise. It has been a custom with several eminent artists to exert all their power in the features of a portrait, and to slight every other part of the picture: The practice was common among the painters of the antient world, and Plutarch alludes to it in his Life of Alexander the Great. Some moderns have even attempted to justify such negligence by sophistical reasoning in its favor; but whenever the negligence is so striking, as to give a slovenly air to the composition, the perfection of parts will seldom atone for deficiency in the whole, and the

mortified spectator of performances so slighted, will be apt to condemn the indolent or hasty painter in the expressive words of Horace,

" *Infelix operis summi, quia ponere totum*
Nescit."

To some pictures of Romney such censure, I must confess, may be very justly applied; but his failings chiefly arose from his having too much to do, and not from a want of ability to do better. In many of his largest portraits and conversation pieces, when he could find time to study the scenery, and meditate on all that he wished to perform, his performance proved him a master in that important knowledge so justly required by Horace to constitute the felicity of an artist. At this period his portraits had raised him so high in public estimation, that he was regarded as the rival of his illustrious contemporary, Sir Joshua Reynolds. Lord Thurlow pleasantly said of them " Reynolds and Romney divide the Town; I am of the Romney faction." This was a sally of

sportive vivacity, and not a declaration of serious preference; for the powerful and comprehensive mind of this noble Lord did ample justice to all the various merits of the two painters, and they have both displayed their talents very happily in his favor. He was painted by each of them at full length, and each has given to the portrait of this memorable Chancellor his peculiar and uncommon portion of intelligence, fortitude, and dignity. He had a great personal regard for Romney, and was highly pleased with his conversation, when his own affability had so completely dissipated the natural reserve of the painter, that he could not only converse, but even dispute without apprehension upon points of art with this exalted personage, who was singularly formidable as an antagonist in any conference, from the force of his ideas, and the fearless facility, with which he expressed them. His memory was richly stored with sublime and pathetic passages from all the great poets; and he loved to expatiate on such as afforded inviting subjects to the pencil. He was willing to encourage painting; and expressed a strong desire of

Romney's executing for him a large picture of Orpheus and Eurydice from Virgil; but on discussing the subject together, the ideas of the peer, and those of the painter were so different concerning the mode of treating it on canvas, that Romney despaired of pleasing a patron whose fancy appeared to him very far from being in harmony with his own, and he therefore never began the picture. His neglect of the commission did not however produce any coldness towards him in his invariable friend, who tho' nature had given to his own athletic frame such fibres, as were little used to shake with apprehensions of any kind, considered with generous indulgence the very different nerves of the artist. He shewed his esteem for the talents of Romney not only by applauding his portraits, but also by purchasing one of the four pictures of Serena from the Triumphs of Temper, which my friend contrived to finish in despight of his many avocations, within two or three years after the first publication of the poem in 1780. Another of these four pictures was sold to the late Marquis of Stafford, and the remaining two were pur-

chased by the painter's liberal friend of the North, Mr. Curwen. In recollecting the zeal and kindness with which the colours of my friend embellished and gave celebrity to the most successful offspring of my Muse, even here I may be allowed to exclaim

" Let not her social love in silence hide
The just emotions of her grateful pride,
When his quick pencil pour'd upon her sight,
Her own creation in a fairer light;
When her Serena learnt from him to live,
And please by every charm, that life can give.
He has imparted to th' ideal fair
Yet more than beauty's bloom, and youth's attractive air;
For in his studious nymph th' enamour'd eye
May thro' her breast her gentle heart descry,
See the fond thoughts, that o'er her fancy roll,
And sympathy's soft swell, that fills her soul."

In a memorial of Romney, I feel it peculiarly incumbent on me to render all the justice in my power to his benevolent enthusiasm both in art and friend-

ship. This endearing characteristic of my annual visiter enlivened the autumn of 1784 in a manner peculiarly memorable to me, for he interested himself most kindly in the decoration of a new library, that I was then fitting up, and began at my request, on that occasion, the striking resemblance of himself in oil, which may be regarded as the best of his own portraits, and which is marked in the frontispiece to this volume with the year of his age, forty-nine. It well expresses that pensive vivacity, and profusion of ideas, which a spectator might discover in his countenance, whenever he sat absorbed in studious meditation. Romney engaged at this time our favorite sculptor Flaxman to model for him a bust of his Sussex friend. It was luxury, of the most delightful nature, to enjoy in the quiet of a pleasant village, the society of two such artists, who felt towards each other a degree of filial and parental attachment; as Flaxman most gratefully declared, that the kind encouragement, which he received from Romney, in his childhood, contributed not a little towards making him a sculptor. The painter used to

frequent the shop of his father to purchase figures in plaister; and seeing the young Flaxman trying to model, at a very early age, he would often stand a considerable time to contemplate the progress of the little boy's work, never failing on such occasions to conciliate his regard, and to inspirit his ambition, by a mixture of praise, and instruction. So arose their high, and just, esteem for each other; it continued thro' life, and many pleasing proofs of their reciprocal regard will occur in the course of this narrative: But to return to the year 1784—Romney afforded a new gratification to his rural friends by displaying the versatility of his talents, and shewing us, that like the favorite idols of his admiration Michael Angelo, and Raphael, he too might distinguish himself, both in painting and in sculpture, if propitious fortune should ever afford him any splendid opportunities of exercising the two kindred arts. It happened that I had formed a rustic grotto as an entrance to a shady sequestered walk: It was my wish to render the grotto a sort of little modest mausoleum to the me-

mory of my departed friend, Thornton: Romney, who had admired the mild and endearing manners of that excellent person, was pleased with the idea, and kindly modelled a little figure of *afflicted Friendship*, in the form of a reclining female, to rest on a sepulchral vase, and to be stationed in the centre of the grotto: The figure was elegant, and its expression powerfully pathetic; but it perished in that destructive neglect, by which my over-busied friend was too apt to injure, and demolish, a multitude of his various projected works, in which he had rapidly made a very promising progress. He conveyed the figure to London for the purpose of having the clay properly hardened by fire, but in the hurry of his business, he forgot, and suffered it to drop in pieces by failing to give it, in due time, that durability, which it really deserved. The importunate business of portrait-painting encreased upon him to such a degree, that he could hardly find a few minutes of leisure, in any part of his day, except when the deficiency of light precluded him from the use of his colours. Hence he neglected a large and favorite fancy-picture, which

he began, I believe, this year with great felicity of expression at Eartham. The picture was to form a striking landscape, with a female child of seven years, of the size of life, kneeling by the side of a dead fawn, under a massive tree, split by lightning, which had killed her favorite animal. The head of the girl is much in the manner of Corregio, and her sorrow most exquisitely expressed; but the head is all that was ever completed. Let me here mention two memorials by which the friends of Romney at this time expressed their regard for him. Flaxman before he returned from Eartham to London in the autumn of 1784 spontaneously modelled a diminutive, but expressive bust of the painter, which gave rise to the following

SONNET.

" *Dear image of our friend! Thou speaking clay!*
Whose little lineaments, enrich'd with thought,
From skilful Flaxman's plastic hand have caught
Life, that may last, till earth shall melt away

And to the eye of distant time convey
The painter, who shall prove, as genius ought,
Immortal in the works, himself has wrought,
And grac'd with Fame, unconscious of decay.
Whate'er thy fortune in a future age,
When taste may fail each prouder bust to guard,
Here, modest head! our tender thoughts engage,
Lov'd as the Lares of thy rural bard!
Here dwell! and strengthen, in thy poet's heart,
The zeal of friendship, and the love for art!"

Romney united in his character such extraordinary portions of timid reserve, and of enterprizing ardor, as were well suited to excite, and keep alive, the solicitude of his friends for his prosperity and honor. This solicitude was felt and expressed by many of his companions, but with peculiar fervency by Meyer, who thinking most highly of his powers as an artist, used many kind arguments, in the hope of persuading him to become a member of the Royal Academy, and to aspire, in due time, to the honor of presiding in that respectable society; a distinction which the

warm-hearted adviser most firmly believed the expanding talents of our friend, in their progressive improvement, could not fail to deserve, and attain. I had a long conference with Meyer and Romney together on this important topic; and I must confess that I took an opposite side of the question, and used the many arguments, which my intimacy with the painter suggested, to guard him against that incessant disquietude and vexation, which I imagined his connexion with the Academy must inevitably produce. As the arguments were chiefly founded on the mental peculiarities of my friend, they were far from evincing any sort of disrespect towards a society, which is justly entitled to national regard. I may yet observe how subsequent events afforded me reason to rejoice, that I had endeavoured to suppress, and not to quicken that particular ambition, which a benevolent artist, whom I sincerely loved and admired, had wished to kindle in the bosom of our friend. If Reynolds, who certainly possessed, in a consummate degree, that mild wisdom, and conciliating serenity of temper, which Romney as certainly

wanted, if Reynolds could ever find his seat of dignity (so perfectly merited) a thorny situation, that he was eager to relinquish, the more apprehensive, and more hasty spirit of Romney would have been utterly distracted in a post so ill suited to a mind of sensibilities infinitely too acute for the peaceful enjoyment of a high public station.

The more he reflected on the peculiarities of his own disposition, the more he was convinced, that the comfort of his life, and his advancement in art, would be most easily, and most effectually promoted by his setting limits to his passion for popular applause, and confining the display of his works, whether portraits or fancy pictures, to the circle of his own domestic gallery, which gradually became a favorite scene of general resort. The extent of his business, as a portrait painter, and the rapidity of his pencil, may be estimated from the following anecdote lately imparted to me by his worthy disciple Mr. Robinson, of Windermere, who residing with him in the year 1785, and keeping a regular account of his sitters, found,

that their portraits, painted in that year, amounted to the sum of £3635, according to the following prices of the painter at that time: For a whole length eighty guineas, for a half whole length sixty, for a half length forty, for a kit-cat thirty, for a head twenty guineas.

The emoluments of portrait painting may be said both to support and to ruin a great artist: They afford him affluence, but they impede his progress in that higher field of imagination, which promises a richer harvest of delight and honor. Romney felt and lamented the fetters of his profession, and often pleased himself with a prospect of shaking them off, but he was not aware of the infinite efforts required to break the golden fetters of custom. He was not dazzled, or enslaved by the gold he gained, for he had a spirit superior to such bribery, and he often threw money away as rapidly as he acquired it; but he really had a pleasure in painting a new face, exclusive of all pecuniary considerations, and his heart was so tenderly sympathetic, that if he had resolved most solemnly

never to paint another portrait for any fresh sitter, yet a lover, begging a likeness of his favorite nymph, or a mother, requesting a resemblance of a darling child, might have melted, in a few moments, his sternest resolution. If the facility, with which he sympathized in the feelings of those, who required his attention, often led him to find in portrait-painting much cordial gratification, unmixed with ideas of interest; on the other hand it tormented him exceedingly, when he was desired to preserve an exact likeness, and yet to bestow considerable character on a countenance, to which nature had given very little or none. On such occasions he was apt to be very faithful in his representation of life, and once when the portrait of a simple gentleman was sent back to him to receive a more animated countenance, I remember to have seen the artist in much ludicrous perplexity from having vainly tried to make a simpleton, most truly delineated, retain his own features, and yet look like a man of sense. I could not on this occasion apply to him an admirable compliment addrest by Dryden to his friend Kneller;

" *Thus thou sometimes art forc'd to draw a fool,*
But so his follies in thy posture sink,
The senseless idiot seems at last to think."

For in the portrait alluded to, a weakness of understanding was still visible, after repeated endeavours of the mortified painter to give his too faithful inanimate image the requested air of intelligence.

But the pleasures, and vexations, of portrait-painting were almost forgotten in the splendid prospect of higher occupation, which opened upon the painters of our country, in the year 1786, when the late Alderman Boydell began to conceive, and develop, his important project of forming the Shakespeare Gallery. His nephew, Mr. Josiah Boydell, has said in a Preface to the magnificent book, which his enterprising uncle did not live to complete, that the project originated from an accidental conversation in his house at Hampstead; but in this account there is a little mistake, of which its author was probably not

aware: The project may be rather said to have originated in the parlour of Romney, for the conference at Hampstead was, in truth, the sequel of a very animated and amicable conversation between the Alderman and the Painter in Cavendish Square, in which, as in the conference at Hampstead, I happened to be one of the party.

The first idea of forming a series of paintings from Shakespeare, as a great national work, seems to belong to the poet Collins, as Mrs. Barbauld has well observed in an elegant and judicious Preface to her edition of that author, who, in his Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer, in speaking of Shakespeare, exclaims

" O might some verse with happiest skill persuade
Expressive picture to adopt thine aid!
What wondrous draught might rise from every page!
What other Raphaels charm a distant age!"

The late Alderman Boydell, tho' not exactly such an enthusiast as the poet Collins, had an uncommon

ardor of mind, and such an extensive acquaintance with the busy world, as rendered him, in many points, a fit agent to realize the vision of the poet. He had long been in the habit of employing the talents of English artists, and had raised a considerable fortune from the success of their labor. He had also a large portion of honest and laudable pride, which led him to take infinite delight in the idea of extending his commercial prospects by the advancement of national honor. He spoke to Romney of a Shakespeare Gallery: The professional, and the patriotic enthusiasm of the painter kindled at the first mention of the idea; and he immediately offered, in the most liberal manner, to devote whatever powers he might possess to a friendly promotion of a project, that could hardly fail to interest every lover of the arts and of England. At the same time he generously suggested to the sanguine projector, the perils, which might attend the conduct of an enterprise so important. He thought the painters ought to shew their liberality, and public spirit, by working, in support of such an undertaking,

without any prospect of great emolument; he named a moderate sum for pictures of the largest size; a sum, which however inadequate it might appear to the labour, he declared he should himself be willing to accept on the occasion, if generally established among all the artists of eminence. I mention this anecdote to obviate an evil report against Romney, accusing him of having acted unfairly towards the conductor of the project, by first offering to paint for it on very moderate terms, and afterwards requiring much more. It is true, that Romney's first proposal to the late Alderman was liberal, and friendly, in a high degree; but it was conditional, and the Alderman himself violated the condition in a manner, that wounded the honest pride of the artist, by offering to other painters a sum far superior to what Romney had suggested, as the general reward for each. The circumstance gave rise, I believe, to some pecuniary squabbles, of which I know not the progress, or the issue; they are better forgotten than revived; and I shall close the subject of their dispute with one remark on the real character of the parties concerned. They were both men of an

eager spirit, and a warm temper; such as are very apt to misunderstand each other, and to grow angry in proportion to that misunderstanding: both have been accused of avarice, by their enemies, and both, I am, persuaded, unjustly. Each might have a transient appearance of labouring under that sordid infirmity, but I am inclined to think, that much as they differed in their feelings on many points, the ruling passion of both was an active, and a generous, zeal in the service of art. But to return to the first conference between them concerning Shakespeare: It closed with a request from the Alderman, that we might adjourn the debate from Cavendish Square to the house of his nephew, at Hampstead. On Saturday the 4th of November, 1786, Mr. Josiah Boydell entertained, in a very hospitable manner, the little party of friends to the projected Gallery, whom he has named in his Preface to Shakespeare. How far the project was ripened in the discourse of that day, I do not recollect, but I find among my old papers relating to that period, one which I wrote at the request of the elder Boydell entitled "The first sketch of a project to en-

courage historical painting in this kingdom, and to render at the same time a national tribute to the genius of Shakespeare." After stating the patriotic Alderman's design of building a gallery, and publishing a book, it closes with the following notice of his earliest intention concerning the commencement of his publication.—" The first Number will contain Macbeth, and As you like it; the four Designs of this Number by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Romney, Mr. West, and Mr. Copley."

The Alderman in beginning this enterprise soon found himself in a path of flowers, and of thorns. Like the manager of a great public theatre, he had much to please him from the sympathetic zeal, the ambition, and the talents; much to plague him from the pretensions, the caprices, and the infirmities of the many clashing individuals, whom it became his business to unite in the formation of a sumptuous spectacle, for his commercial advantage, and for the amusement and honor of his country. In the course of his long, and busy, life he had an uncommon share

both of obloquy and applause. He had difficulties of many kinds to encounter, and misfortunes to sustain, that no sagacity could prevent, or foresee; but he seems never to have lost a manly confidence in his own industry, and zeal, and in the candor, and liberality, of the nation, which he had so long endeavoured to adorn. It is pleasing to reflect, that this enterprising merchant of the arts was rescued from impending ruin by the justice, and generosity, of our country. That he had a heart to feel deep, and delightful, gratitude for such public beneficence, I am persuaded by a petty incident, relating to myself, to whom he could only have a very trifling obligation. On my sending a small subscription to his Lottery, I received from him a letter of kindness, accompanied by a present of peculiar value to me, as it comprised all the prints, which he had ever published, from pictures of our departed friend Romney. The grateful Alderman magnified my little services in the business of his Shakespeare; but in truth I had no pretensions to any signal favor from him on that occasion. I happened indeed to be passing some weeks with our friend

in Cavendish Square, when the project arose. I was highly pleased with Romney's eagerness to devote himself to historical painting; and with the Alderman's zeal in entering upon the arduous adventure of his Gallery: but I wrote nothing in its favor except a brief sketch of the project which I have mentioned, and a letter to engage my friend Wright of Derby to paint for the Gallery. My application to Wright was made at the earnest desire of the Alderman, whom I zealously advised to interest the late Mr. Steevens in his important undertaking, by persuading that gentleman to superintend the projected magnificent edition of Shakespeare; as I knew, by a long intercourse with the most sprightly of commentators, that he had studied our unrivalled dramatist during many years with the fondest enthusiasm.

The active mind of Romney was now thrown into great agitation by the prospect of a new career. He had long expressed a very anxious wish to find some promising field, in which he might endeavour to obtain distinction in the higher province of his art.

This desire became most remarkably predominant, when Reynolds received a commission to paint an historical picture for the Empress of Russia, and sent his infant Hercules to Petersburgh. In admiring the various beauties of that splendid picture, I seemed to feel that the great artist might have chosen a subject more suited to the occasion, than a very hacknied incident of antient mythology; and I exhorted Romney in one of his autumnal periods of historical study, to paint a striking scene from the life of the Czar Peter, and send it as a present to the imperial Catherine. The idea pleased my friend; and a very important scene was selected, that struck his fancy most forcibly as pathetic and sublime; it seemed peculiarly to suit his powers of expression, and he settled the plan of the whole picture in his mind, but other occupations, made him soon abandon all ideas of presenting to a sovereign so little attractive in all her magnificence, any spontaneous offering of his art. The idea of painting from his favorite Shakespeare was much more alluring to the spirit of Romney. He had a quick

and keen relish for the beauties of that wonderful poet, altho' his own fancy was so volatile, and his mode of reading so desultory, that it may be questioned, if he ever read, without interruption, two acts of the dramas that he most cordially admired. The feelings of Romney often displayed, in the strongest point of view, the astonishing force of habit. It seems surprising that the man, who with a pencil in his hand, could attend to a single subject for many hours, without any symptoms of fatigue, should feel his powers of attention very rapidly exhausted, if he exchanged his pencil for a book, or a pen. Even the great Michael Angelo seems, at times, to have had similar feelings, for in one of his letters he says, " Writing is to me a very irksome occupation, because it is not my art." " *Lo scrivere m' è di grande affanno, perche non è mia arte!*"

I have transcribed the original words of this illustrious artist, but perhaps we ought not to understand them in a literal sense, as we have several of his compositions, both in prose and verse. Mr. Duppa

has added to his excellent Life of Michael Angelo a series of his letters, and a more copious collection of his poems; poetry seems to have been a favorite amusement of his devout and venerable old age. It is probable that his professional writings, mentioned by his scholar Condivi, have perished, altho' Gori in his Notes on Condivi probably meant to include them in his enumeration of Michael Angelo's writings, namely "*i Ragionamenti, le lettere, e le Rime.*" I conclude the Ragionamenti to be lost, as they would not otherwise have escaped the researches of Michael Angelo's last very accurate and zealous biographer. It may however gratify the curious to observe, that some notice of them may be found in the work of a Florentine, Vicentio Carduchi, who rose to considerable eminence as a painter in Spain. He published at Madrid, about seventy years after the decease of Michael Angelo, " Dialogues upon Art, between a Master and a Disciple," in the Spanish language. In the commencement of the work, the disciple enumerates the treatises, he read for the acquisition of professional know-

ledge, after naming those of Albert Durer, Leon Battista, Alberti, and others, he mentions, "*Algunos discursos manuscrittos doctissimos de Michael Ańgel.*" I do not recollect any later trace of such compositions, but this seems to prove that in 1633 they still existed. It is remarkable that they are not mentioned by Vasari, who has not failed to declare, that he heard his illustrious master and friend utter many admirable observations on art, which he, Vasari, intended to preserve and publish in the form of a dialogue: an intention that his editor Bottari says he never fulfilled.

Romney resembled, and far surpassed, Michael Angelo in a dislike to the mere manual act of writing. A peculiarity in his disposition the more to be regretted, because he had a fund of original ideas relating to his own art, and also such an uncommon energy of mind, that, with a moderate application to the pen, he might have rendered himself a writer of very powerful eloquence.

In conversation he was often delightfully elo-

quent, particularly in describing to a friend pathetic scenes in humble life, which he often explored; sometimes for the purpose of discovering new subjects for his art; and frequently for the nobler purpose of relieving distress; for no man could be more tenderly alive both to the duty, and the delight of generous compassion, and evangelical charity. His constant flow of lucrative business supplied him with a fund for the distribution of alms so extensive, that I am persuaded no one could form any accurate idea of their amount. From the period of his settling in Cavendish Square, to the year I am now speaking of, 1786, his chief attention had been devoted to portraits. In that time he had painted almost all the eminent characters of his country. Mr. Pitt sat to him in July 1783. He had often five sitters in a day, and he laboured so assiduously, that he supposed his work of every morning, on an average, had it all been employed on the same canvas, might be sufficient to produce one complete picture of his smallest size. Such was the speed, and such the popularity of his pencil, that he might thus be said to paint at the rate of a portrait every day. He wished

however continually for higher, and more diversified, occupation; tho' he relieved himself occasionally by painting a few fancy pictures: In executing some of these, he had the great advantage of studying the features, and the mental character, of a lady, on whom nature had lavished such singular beauty, and such extraordinary talents, as have rendered her not only the favorite model of Romney, whom she honored with her filial tenderness, and esteem, but the idolized wife of an accomplished ambassador.

In having occasion to speak of Lady Hamilton, my gratitude is doubly excited; first by a pleasing recollection of her invariable kindness to our favourite departed painter, and secondly by a deep and just sense of the friendly solicitude she expressed for me in a season of sickness, when she most kindly invited me to restore my declining health by residing under her care in the salutary climate of Naples.

The high and constant admiration, with which Romney contemplated the personal, and mental en-

dowments of this lady, and the gratitude he felt for many proofs of her friendship, will appear in passages from his letters, describing some memorable incidents, when their recent and pleasing impression on his mind and heart gave peculiar vivacity to his description. The talents, which nature bestowed on the fair Emma, led her to delight in the two kindred arts of Music, and Painting. In the first she acquired great practical ability; for the second she had exquisite taste, and such expressive powers, as could furnish to an historical painter, an inspiring model for the various characters, either delicate, or sublime, that he might have occasion to represent. Her features, like the language of Shakespeare, could exhibit all the feelings of nature, and all the gradations of every passion, with a most fascinating truth, and felicity of expression. Romney delighted in observing the wonderful command she possessed over her eloquent features, and thro' the surprising vicissitudes of her destiny she ever took a generous pride in serving him as a model; her peculiar force and variations of feeling, countenance, and gesture, inspirited and ennobled the

productions of his art. One of his earliest fancy pictures, from this animated model, was a whole-length of Circe with her magic wand. It could not be painted later than the year 1782, as I recollect a letter from a friend, in that year, describing the very powerful impression made by this picture on a party who then surveyed it. Some years afterwards I had a conversation in Romney's gallery on the same picture with an opulent nobleman, now no more, who discovered a faint inclination to purchase it, but it was reserved for a purchaser of superior taste. A Calypso, a Magdalen, a Wood Nymph, a Bacchante, the Pythian Priestess on her tripod, and a Saint Cecilia, were all drawn from the same admirable model. In 1786 her features gave rise to the picture of Sensibility. Several incidents relating to this picture were so singularly pleasant, that a brief account of them may be acceptable to my reader.

During my visit to Romney in November, I happened to find him one morning contemplating by himself, a recently coloured head, on a small canvas. I



Sensibility

Engraved by Caroline Watson Engraver to Her Majesty from the original Picture

Published April 14th 1800 by Thomas Payne, Pall Mall.

expressed my admiration of his unfinished work in the following terms:—"This is a most happy beginning: you never painted a female head with such exquisite expression; you have only to enlarge your canvas, introduce the shrub mimosa, growing in a vase, with a hand of this figure approaching its leaves, and you may call your picture a personification of Sensibility."—"I like your suggestion, replied the painter, and will enlarge my canvas immediately."—"Do so, (I answered with exultation, on his kindly adopting my idea) and without loss of time I will hasten to an eminent nurseryman at Hammersmith, and bring you the most beautiful plant I can find, that may suit your purpose."

The plant was immediately found; the picture finished, and deservedly admired in Romney's gallery, without my entertaining any thought, that it would ever be mine. It became so by the following incident: a gentleman expressed an eager desire to purchase a small farm, that belonged to me, contiguous to his villa; I said in answer to his application, that I had no wish

to sell the land in question, but as he considered the acquisition of it a point so essential to his pleasure, I would mention to him an idea, by which we might mutually and liberally promote the pleasure of each other. If he would pay such a fair and full market price for the land, as might satisfy a person referred to, and also present to me a certain fancy-picture, after purchasing it from Romney, we might reciprocally exult in our respective acquisitions. He was highly pleased with the terms, and speedily sent me the picture. In addition to the delight arising from this performance, as a fine work of art, it afforded me the cordial gratification of terminating a disagreement between Romney, and the elder Boydell, on some unpleasant altercation concerning a print. I had the pleasure of closing their dispute by lending this picture to the alderman to be engraved for him; it returned to Sussex with a letter, and two attendant figures in *chiaro oscuro* from the friendly artist, in 1789; of these I shall speak in due time. I now hasten to display the feelings and resolutions of Romney, on finding himself engaged in a new sphere of action. These he ex-

pressed in a letter so forcibly written, that it proves the painter's fear of wanting words, was only the effect of natural reserve, and nervous timidity in addressing strangers. Even Cowper himself, whose command of language was so masterly, felt similar embarrassment on similar occasions. They were both men of genius, whose fibres were tremblingly alive. In February 1787, Romney thus described himself in a letter to me.

My dear friend,

I often think how much more satisfaction I should have in life, had I the power of communicating my feelings and sentiments with facility. I begin to find that a tolerable share of that power is extremely necessary for me at this time, since I have been thrown more into public life. Assist me in all you can, both in what will correct me in writing, and what will contribute to my advantage in my profession. I have now entered upon a new plan, and must fight through it with all my might. Do not think I despair! but I find it necessary to gather all the assistance, I can collect from my friends, as I have so very little time, either to think or read for myself. This cursed portrait-painting! How I am shackled with it! I am determined to live frugally, that I may enable myself to cut it short, as soon as I am tolerably independent, and then give my mind up to those delightful regions of imagination.

You promised me you would collect and send me subjects for pictures.

Farewell my very dear friend,

And believe me to be most sincerely and affectionately your's,

 G. R.

I have a peculiar gratification in communicating to the public, some portions of my long correspondence with my departed friend, because I am convinced they will completely annihilate every unfavourable effect that may have arisen, from a very hasty and bitter sarcasm once uttered in company against Romney, by one of his familiar acquaintance, who, while he professed a regard for the painter, declared him to be so grossly illiterate, that he was utterly unable to write even an ordinary letter.

It is most true, that Romney abhorred the task of writing a formal letter, or common note of civility, but it is equally true, as I trust the subsequent pages will sufficiently prove, that in pouring forth his heart to a person, in whom he affectionately confided, he could write with a natural eloquence, flowing from feelings at once so tender, and so acute, that the language, they suggested, could hardly fail to excite a considerable degree of sympathy, even in a stranger.

Had Romney devoted himself to the pen, instead

of the pencil, he would have been a writer as original as Rousseau. I have often thought that these two eminent persons, though different in their studies, and in their fortune, were in some points wonderfully alike. They had the same vehemence of desire for distinction, the same intensity of application in the pursuit of it, and the same nervous terror of secret, or rather supposed enemies, which occasioned or encreased their frequent fits of depressive disquietude.

But I return to the arduous occupation of the painter, in the year 1787. In the summer of that year he came earlier than usual to Eartham, and devoted his time with great diligence and anxiety to forming a plan for his great picture from the Tempest. Our friend Meyer, who had lately suffered from a fever, and was recovering his strength by the pure air of Sussex, happened to be one of our party, and at this, as indeed at all times, expressed a most lively esteem for the talents, and a most friendly solicitude for the honor of the artist, whom he had first introduced into the little circle of my very intimate friends. Meyer, who

had infinite quickness of perception, thought he discovered, that his presence threw some degree of restraint upon Romney, in his important studies; and generously shortened his visit, lest he should any ways obstruct the imagination of our friend in the new and momentous undertaking, with which his mind was now beginning to labour. Imagination is a very capricious, and variable, power. In some men it acts perfectly superior to all surrounding circumstances: in others it seems to be shackled, or rather palsied, by the most trifling obstruction. There are persons, who can compose a picture, or a poem, as well, and perhaps better, in the presence of a friend, than if they were alone: others have such a constitutional coyness of spirit, that they can produce no offspring of fancy, except in absolute solitude. Minds of the latter cast are, in general I believe, the minds of finest faculties, and of sublimest power, when exerting the undisputed prerogative of solitary meditation. After Meyer had quitted us, I imparted his conjecture to Romney, who was grateful for the considerate kindness of his conduct, and confessed, that he wished to be left very much to

himself. The scene, on which he now resided, was happily suited to sequestered study. At a time, when I was so much troubled with a tendency to inflammation in the eyes, that I could not ride in the open air without suffering, I had built a riding-house of wood; its size and situation rendered it peculiarly delightful to the fancy of Romney, as a study for his art. It was distant from the dwelling-house, and screened on three sides by foliage; in its front to the south a very broad gravel walk with borders of evergreens, commanded an extensive view of sloping and level land, terminated by the sea, which when the spectator was so stationed, that his eyes lost the intermediate vale, had the appearance of being delightfully near to the building, especially when the water reflected a brilliant sky. In this favorite retirement, which afforded him a walk of a hundred feet under cover, Romney began to meditate on the various pictures from Shakespeare, that he hoped to produce; and here he formed, on a very large canvas, the first sketch of his scene from the Tempest.

It was in truth a formidable enterprize for a painter, who had so long devoted himself to the quiet business of painting portraits, to undertake to fill an immense canvas with a multitude of figures under vehement agitation, and to use the forcible phrase of Shakespeare, in " a fever of the mad." The intense desire of executing a very grand, and sublime picture, and the apprehension of failing in it, created many a tempest in the fluctuating spirits of Romney. He often trembled for himself; and his intimates who most endeavoured to animate and support his courage, were not without their fears of his sinking under this mighty undertaking. Having sketched at Eartham a beginning of his design, in some points happy, and in others unfortunate, he returned with his great canvas to London in the autumn. Rejoining him there in November, I had the pleasure of observing the progress he made in his arduous work, and of adding my influence to that of other friends, who were peculiarly solicitous to encourage him on this important occasion. In zeal, intelligence and affection, his pleasant friend Carwardine was inferior to none. I find among my

papers a record of his kindness to Romney at this period, that exhibits this amiable man, and our beloved artist also, in a point of view so interesting, that I shall transcribe the anecdote and the dialogue I allude to, from a letter that returned into my hands on the decease of the friend, to whom it was addrest.

London, November 10, 1787.

I must try to amuse you, as well as my extreme haste will allow, by a little history of Romney, Carwardine, and the Chancellor.—Carwardine asked his great patron to subscribe to the Shakespeare, shewing him the papers.

Lord Thurlow.—What! is Romney at work for it? He cannot paint in that style, it is out of his way; by God, he'll make a balderdash business of it.

Carwardine.—Your Lordship does not yet thoroughly know Mr. Romney; for he has such a native modesty, that it prevents his shewing, before your Lordship, his real powers.

Lord Thurlow.—Have you seen his design?

Carwardine.—No! my Lord, he shews it to no mortal yet.

Lord Thurlow.—I should be glad to talk to him about it—bring him to dine with me to-day.

Carwardine.—I certainly will, my Lord.

Carwardine brings this dialogue fresh to me. Away we post to the Pittore.

Carwardine.—Romney! I have been talking to the Chancellor, about you, and your great picture: he says you cannot paint from Shakespeare.

Romney.—Does he? I should be glad to talk to him about it, for he has some grand ideas in his gloomy head.

Carwardine.—I rejoice to hear you say so. You shall talk with him to-day, for you are already engaged to dine with him.

Romney.—Are you in earnest? But I cannot go.

Carwardine.—You must go. It is the happiest incident for your grand work, that could have arisen.

In short Carwardine talked the terrified artist into spirits sufficient to make him go, with some pleasure, to this aweful dinner, of which you shall hear more in my next.

Lincoln's Inn Fields, November 12, 1787.

You will be curious to know how our friend Romney past his day with the Chancellor, Carwardine tells me, their dialogue was highly entertaining to him, as they debated several points with warmth, and spirit on both sides. They had no intruder to disturb the trio, and continued with their great host till ten in the evening.

The zeal and conciliating manners of Carwardine accomplished his benevolent wish of rendering Lord Thurlow and Romney completely acquainted, and kindly just to each other. It is to the credit of these two extraordinary men, that although they were both stiff in their opinions, and not very apt to think, or to

feel alike, they had still much mutual esteem. Each delighted in that energy of idea, and force of expression, which gave to their conversation a powerful and sometimes a rough spirit; for each could speak in a tone of the most refined, and endearing politeness, or with an asperity, sometimes ludicrous in the display of momentary spleen, and sometimes seriously alarming. "Mr. Romney (said Lord Thurlow one day to the artist) before you paint Shakespeare, I advise you to read him." The advice, though rude in its sound, was materially good; for Romney had a rapidity of fancy, too apt to indulge itself in desultory excursion. He was like a bee, who flies off from a flower, before he has gathered half the honey, that time would enable him to collect; but he was conscious of his defects, and grateful even for rough admonition. He had no servile deference, even for the suggestions of Lord Thurlow, when he felt them to be ill-founded. The Chancellor advised him in a conversation that I recollect, of a later period, to study for the features of his Prospero, the face of a certain English nobleman in Hou-

braken's collection of illustrious heads; but I remember, when we examined the character of the countenance together, we thought it utterly unfit for the purpose.

Romney justly imagined, that it would aid, and inspirit him in his great undertaking, to take, a fresh survey of Raphael's cartoons, and before I returned to Sussex, in 1787, a little party of his friends attended him to Windsor, where we passed the night, and contemplated all the pictures of the royal residence the next morning, under the guidance of the alert, and friendly Meyer, whom we had taken up on our road. We found Mr. West at work on his splendid historical pictures relating to the founder of the castle; and he politely quitted his occupation to shew much obliging civility to a brother artist, and the little group of his companions. It was a morning of real pleaure, such as memory loves to recollect. Romney was gratified, in the highest degree; and declared, that he felt his mind invigorated, and enriched, by a new research into the merits of Raphael:—thus confirming the sensible remark of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in

his Twelfth Academical Discourse, " the daily food, and nourishment of the mind of an artist, is found in the great works of his predecessors."

Romney seems to have reduced the number of his sitters in this year, that he might devote himself, with the greater ardour and perseverance, to his large work, in which he now advanced with a chearful spirit, but in the first part of the following year, he had a severe fit of illness, that deplorably impeded his progress. He describes himself in the following letter:

March 15, 1788.

Yesterday morning I received your very kind letter. It was kind indeed to write immediately after hearing of my indisposition. In so doing you have relieved me from a weight of anxiety, that pressed upon me. I cannot bring to my mind any thing I have done, that could give you displeasure. Forgive the irregularities in my feelings! I have not done any thing to the Cassandra, nor to Sensibility, since you left me, nor made any advances in the Tempest-scene, the last two months. Be assured I love you well, and would not do any thing intentionally to offend you.

Ever most sincerely and affectionately your's,

G. R.

P. S. I began to write yesterday, but could not get on, I was so weak. I am much better to-day, and to-morrow begin to work.

My displeasure, to which my friend alluded, and the cause of it all vanished from my mind, and were absorbed in my extreme solicitude for his perfect recovery. His health revived, but continued more than usually tender. In searching for traces of our intercourse this year, I find, that I pressed him most anxiously to hasten into Sussex. I was peculiarly solicitous to render his residence in the country as quiet as possible, not only that I might enjoy more of his society, but that his pencil might work with the happier energy. I assured him, with great truth, that I loved his society very much, but that his glory was still dearer to me, than my own pleasure, or rather, that it made one among the best pleasures of my life. I entreated him to be with me just as much as he thought most consistent with this, our darling object.

The air of London had oppress him so much in April, that he took a lodging in Hampstead, merely to sleep in, and return to business in town early every morning. I was painfully alarmed by the deprest state of his spirits, and hope, that I contributed a little to their

revival, as I happened to be near him at this time, on a visit, to one of my earliest friends, (since deceased) in Lincoln's Inn Fields. I wished to take the convalescent painter into Sussex on my return, but his pressing engagements to different sitters detained him in London, till the summer was advanced. He could not reach Eartham till August, and was rendered inactive by indisposition for some time after his arrival; but he revived as usual on the spot peculiarly favorable to his health, and continued to paint there with energy and success till near the end of September.

The subjects that chiefly occupied his pencil were studies on canvas from Shakespeare. On his return to London, he imposed a new law on himself to admit no sitter till after twelve at noon, that he might employ all the best part of his morning in advancing his great picture from the Tempest. I had the pleasure of witnessing his improving progress in this very anxious work, by passing the commencement of the winter in London. I had taken an apartment in Barnard's inn, under the same roof with my learned and

benevolent friend, the late Rev. Dr. Warner, partly to attend, with more convenience, to literary business of my own, and partly in the hope of being useful to Romney, either by encouraging his apprehensive spirit, or assisting him in the humble capacity of a painter's layman. It was generally a great relief and gratification to him to have the opportunity of conversing with an intimate confidential friend, while his pencil was employed.

Romney had a singularly quick and deep sense of friendly kindness, and if a little cloud of spleen occasionally obstructed the sunshine of his affection, the cloud was easily dispersed, and in his endeavours to atone for a casual asperity of humour, he was extremely indulgent to those he regarded, and equally severe to himself. One of his letters of the following year, will forcibly confirm this remark. It is a literal truth that I have not the slightest trace in my memory of the displeasure, to which he alludes, but he thought he had offended me, and as a kind act of expiation, he sent me two figures in *chiaro oscuro*, Sorrow and Joy,

as companions to his picture of Sensibility, now returning to Sussex from the hands of the engraver.

London, October 27, 1789.

My very dear friend,

I wish I had the power of expressing to you the satisfaction I felt on reading your very kind and generous letter. To find your displeasure removed gave a relief to those uncomfortable feelings, that had pressed heavily upon my mind. I hope you will never have reason to complain of any part of my conduct hereafter. I think I have profited by these sufferings, as I have been led to examine more minutely into myself than I ever did before, and to correct the sudden irritations of my nervous mind. They did not arise from want of affection: there was no decline in that on my part, nor ever will.

I hope I shall always and under every circumstance, and situation, remember with the warmest gratitude your extraordinary kindness to me, and the great benefits I have received from your hands, and your society. You have been the best friend I ever had, and I have loved you accordingly.

My sorrow gave birth to one of the companions for Sensibility. You will find it is The Painter's Muse in Tears, *and I flatter myself you will feel it, and like it.*

I am very much obliged by your kind invitation to Eartham. I will take a run down if it be only for a day or two.

I wish you would again make my house your town residence. I suffer much by the loss of your society. Be assured my dear friend, I am with the most sincere affection, ever your's.

G. R.

My reply to a letter so full of gratitude and affection assured the feeling and candid artist of my firm persuasion, that we loved each other. I expressed a chearful hope that our reciprocal regard, so necessary to the comfort of each, would not only last to the end of our existence, but be remembered to our mutual honor, when both shall have ceased to live. May the book that I am now writing have merit sufficient to verify that affectionate prediction, and faithfully preserve the memory of a long, and cordial friendship, to which I may truly and gratefully profess myself indebted for innumerable hours of social delight.

In the midst of these tender recollections I cannot fail to remark, that the year which this narrative has now reached, 1789, deprived Romney and me of the lively and zealous friend, who had first made us acquainted, and had ever taken a generous pleasure in promoting our mutual regard. A fever contracted by friendly zeal, in the service of a gentleman engaged in a contested election, proved fatal to Meyer.

Strong vital powers supported him through the distemper, but his relapse soon terminated a life uncommonly active and beneficent. As few mortals can be more worthy of grateful remembrance either as a man or an artist, I shall here insert the well-merited eulogy that truth and affection inscribed upon his tomb:

Meyer, in thy works, the world will ever see,
How great the loss of art, in losing thee,
But love and sorrow find their words too weak,
Nature's keen sufferings on thy death to speak:
Thro' all her duties what a heart was thine!
In this cold dust, what spirit us'd to shine?
Fancy and truth, and gaiety and zeal,
What most we love in life, and losing feel.
Age after age, may not one artist yield,
Equal to thee, in painting's nicer field;
And ne'er shall sorrowing earth to Heaven commend,
A fonder parent, or a firmer friend.

I now return to the great picture, which had occasionally exercised through several years the imagination, and the pencil of Romney. He finished it in the spring, of 1790. His solicitude concerning its completion, and his gratitude to Heaven for having supported his apprehensive spirit, under a long work of such intense anxiety, are so forcibly described in the following letter, that nothing can shew in a stronger point of view the feelings of the painter.

April 21, 1790.

My dear friend,

Your kindness in rejoicing so heartily at the birth of my picture has given me great satisfaction.

There has been an anxiety labouring in my mind the greatest part of the last twelvemonth. At times it had nearly overwhelmed me. I thought I should absolutely have sunk into despair. O what a kind friend is in those times! I thank God (whatever my picture may be) I can say thus much, I am a greater philosopher, and a better christian.

Your's most affectionately,

G. R.

The relief of mind, that Romney enjoyed on having delivered this large and splendid performance to the candor, or the severity of the public, was proportioned



Miranda

Engraved by Caroline Watson, (engraver to Her Majesty) from the original Picture.

Published April 14th 1804, by Thomas Vivrne, Pall Mall.

to the long and anxious labour, which he had bestowed upon it. He was happily conscious, that it was the production of no ordinary painter, and he was also aware, that with considerable merit, it had striking defects, arising from his imperfect and fortuitous education in art, and from the habits of his professional life. There is great force, and magnificence, but not equal clearness of conception in the design, for the hurly-burly in the ship, and the cell of the princely enchanter are unfortunately huddled together. This appeared to me a radical error in the original sketch, which the artist tried many expedients to counteract, but which, in my opinion he was never able completely to remedy. Yet the picture has the primary characteristic belonging to works of true genius, it seizes and it enchants, though it does not absolutely satisfy the mind. It has however the grand merit of exhibiting, forcibly, and faithfully, both the dignity and the grace of Shakespeare's favorite characters. Whoever ingenuously compares the Prospero and Miranda of this picture with the same personages, as delineated by other artists, can hardly fail to feel

very high esteem and respect for the genius of Romney. I recollect with pleasure, that when I conducted that friend to works of elegance, the late Revd. Mr. Cracherode to his first inspection of this picture, then nearly finished in the house of my friend, I was highly gratified by its powerful effect on the feelings of a nice and rather fastidious, Connoisseur. The pencil of the painter had an evident and acknowledged triumph over the prejudices of a refined taste, that had long idolized the designs of the great Italian school, and expected but little from English art.

Of all the admirers of Romney, who rejoiced with him on the completion of his great picture, no one could speak with more zeal for the honor of the artist, than our warm-hearted friend Dr. Warner, who kindly informed me in March, 1790, of the visit that had been paid by himself and by Lord Thurlow, to the newly-finished production in the house of the painter. He is coming forth said the animated divine with a *præfulgebit* indeed, to "flame amazement" like his Ariel.

The zealous friend to every laudable exertion, who thus spoke of Romney, was engaged the same year, 1790, to attend as a domestic Chaplain, the present Marquis of Stafford, who was then going with the title of Lord Gower, as the English Ambassador to Paris. The father of this nobleman had ever shewn a particular regard for Romney, and as his son expressed a similar disposition, the benevolent Chaplain of the new Ambassador very earnestly entreated the artist and his companion of Sussex, to seize so favorable an opportunity of seeing Paris with advantage. It was a time when that scene of astonishing vicissitudes presented to the friends of peace, of freedom, and of the arts, a spectacle of chearful curiosity, and of hope so magnificent in promises of good to mankind, that philanthropy could not fail to exult in the recent prospect, unconscious that the splendid vision was destined to sink in the most execrable horrors of barbarity and blood.

Romney and his friend, were equally willing to accept so kind an invitation, and our little party was

completed according to our wishes by the accession of a most pleasant fellow-traveller. The Revd. Thomas Carwardine, the friend of Romney, during many past years, and at a future period, a very zealous and useful friend to Cowper.

The three associates set forth from Eartham on the thirty-first of July. Passing by Brighton and Dieppe, they arrived at Paris on the third of August, in the evening, and were most cheerfully received by their friend Dr. Warner, who provided them with apartments in the Hotel de Modene.

The few weeks, that we passed in Paris, at this interesting period, were so abundantly productive of intellectual, and social entertainment, that from a recollection of our travels, I might easily form an extensive episode to this work, but wishing to fix my own attention and that of my reader, on my principal subject, I shall here only mention such particulars of our excursion, as may best illustrate the life and character of Romney.

To the regard, with which our friend was honored by Lord Gower and Lady Sutherland, I consider myself and Carwardine indebted for the very polite attention, and kindness, by which they condescended to take a most obliging interest in all our amusements. Here I cannot fail to remark, that the painter described as never to be seen at the tables of the great, except that of Lord Thurlow, might have been seen, not only dining repeatedly with the English Ambassador in Paris, but graciously conducted by that nobleman or his lady, to the houses of foreign artists and to such objects of curiosity, as they esteemed worthy of his notice.

Romney did not forget, that his chief motive for an excursion to France was a wish to improve himself in art by a studious inspection of the finest pictures, that could be found in that country. The very first morning, after his arrival in Paris, was employed in a visit to the Orleans collection. As these admirable pictures have since been publicly exhibited in London, I shall only say of them, that although several were at

this time in the hands of picture-cleaners, yet Romney was favored in future mornings, with the liberty of surveying them all, by the kindness of a new acquaintance, the present Duke of Orleans. He was then a youth, the eldest in the group of princely disciples, at that time attending the accomplished governess, who presided over their education, the celebrated Madame de Genlis.

As I had formerly addrest a short poem to this lady, I was eager to solicit opportunities of conversing with the person, whose writings had afforded me instruction and delight; and I should consider myself as deficient in gratitude, and truth, if I failed to say on this occasion, that as a companion, and as a friend, she more than answered those pleasing expectations, which the authoress had excited. To this lady our party was indebted for every thing, that politeness, benevolence, and graceful talents could accomplish in promoting the wishes of three strangers in her country, who had devoted a few weeks to the purpose of surveying in that country such objects of curiosity as

they deemed most worthy of a traveller's attention. She entertained us in a variety of scenes, in the convent *de la belle chasse* where she resided, in another convent at a little distance from Paris, and in the villa of Rancy. Her engaging disciples of both sexes, added to the charm of her society. Romney was highly pleased with the sprightly benevolence of this admirable lady, and at a future period, when she visited London, he drew a rapid yet faithful sketch of her animated features.

Years of sickness, affliction, and retirement conspired, with the troubled state of the continent, to interrupt my epistolary intercourse with this elegant writer, but I trust she will forgive the liberty I now take to decorate a volume with an engraving from the portrait I have mentioned. I regard it not only as a resemblance of a friend, to whom I have great obligations, but also as serving to illustrate the professional talents and the heart of the friendly artist, whose life I am delineating. In his subsequent years, he

often expressed his high admiration of the original. I now return to such occurrences during our brief residence in Paris, as particularly relate either to Romney, or his art.

The living painters of France, who chiefly engaged his notice, were David and Greuse. Each of these artists favored us with his company to dinner, and David attended us in our visit to the Luxemburgh gallery. This celebrated composition of Rubens had been an idol of my infancy, as the prints of it happened to form a part of the furniture in the dressing room of my mother. Hence a sight of the original pictures affected me with very singular delight. How great is the influence of petty incidents in magnifying the pleasures of human life, when the mind is disposed to avail itself of their power? This magnificent work, with striking defects, has infinite merit. It contains a female head, which in point of expression appeared to me one of the happiest efforts of art, that I ever beheld. I venture to make some observations upon it, in opposition to a sentiment of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who de-

rides those lovers of painting, that fancy they discover in a picture what he thought the pencil could not express, a mixed emotion of the mind. The countenance I allude to is that of the Queen contemplating her new-born child. Her features, if I am not greatly deceived, very clearly and forcibly display the traces of departed pain, and the immediate influence of tenderness and delight. We may learn from the charm of this admirable head, that the most common emotions of nature, when delineated with delicacy and force, are sure to interest and enchant a spectator.

The Splendor of Rubens did not strike us blind to the merit of David. His death of Socrates, his Paris and Helen, and his Horatii, the picture on which he was then engaged, imprest us with considerable respect for his talents, talents which would probably have produced to him a more abundant harvest of honor and happiness, than he has since enjoyed, had all his attention been devoted to his inexhaustible art. Painting is a jealous sovereign, and seldom allows her votaries to exercise their faculties with success in op-

posite pursuits. Moliere in the poem he addrest to his friend Mignard, expresses a similar sentiment.

Qui se donne à la cour se dérobe à son art;
Un esprit partagé rarement se consomme,
Et les emplois de feu demandent tout un Homme.

Apelles would have lost half his own glory had he endeavoured to participate in that of Parmenio. These names remind me of another series of pictures, which formed one of our principal amusements in Paris, I mean the battles of Alexander, by Le Brun. We regretted, like other travellers, that the colouring of this capital artist was not more happily suited to the force and dignity of his designs.

It may reasonably be supposed, that the education of artists has never been so favorable to perfection as it might be wished to prove, because the records of painting describe no painter (even among the greatest) who possessed in just, and equal, degrees, the three grand branches of his art, invention, drawing and co-

louring; the complete union of all the various possible excellencies in works of human ingenuity is like absolute moral perfection. It ought to be the object of continual pursuit, though possibly it is never to be obtained. But the archer may deem himself happy, whose arrow has made a near approach to the eye of the target.

The two French painters, who in the age of Louis the XIV, were great rivals for public favor, Le Brun and Mignard were both men of incessant application, and of enterprizing talents; but they seem to have been unable to resist the great error of their time, a passion for cumbrous finery. Painting, in that age, and nation, appears like a strong child in a sumptuous nursery, half suffocated by a heavy load of magnificence in its cradle.

Poussin and Le Sueur escaped the contagion, and deserve great applause as examples of a purer taste. Had the latter, who was cut off in early life, lived to paint without a diminution of his powers, at the

age of 84, (such was the singular lot of Mignard) the works of Le Sueur would then probably have enabled France to vie with Italy herself in her native productions of art.

But it is time to recollect, that Romney and his fellow travellers have yet to take leave of Paris. After satiating their eyes with works of the pencil in that city, and its environs, and after receiving from foreigners, and from natives of their own country, such seasonable proofs of friendly politeness, as they could never forget, their last morning in Paris was honored by an invitation to breakfast with the ladies, to whose kind attention they had been so often obliged. Obligations which they all felt most cordially, and of which I find a little poetical memorial in the following impromptu:

TO MADAME DE GENLIS, AND HER COMPANIONS,

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21, 1790.

So great the favors shewn us here,
Which time can ne'er efface,
Our gratitude can scarce appear
Proportioned to their grace.

In this distress sure aid I seek,
Dear Pamela, from you,
If those sweet lips will deign to speak
Our thanks, and our adieu!

The travellers returned, as they came, through Normandy, and crossed the water from Dieppe to Brighton with the common occurrences of a short voyage. Romney on reaching Eartham again was particularly pleased to find the new painting room prepared for him, which he had wished to be built, at his own expence, within the riding house, that had served him occasionally as a summer study. The new

apartment had a sky light to the north, with a good fire-place, and was altogether so convenient for the purpose intended, that the painter might work in it at any season, with all the accommodation he could desire for pictures of considerable extent. In this apartment we both hoped he might execute many works of imagination, as he proposed gradually to withdraw from the drudgery of his profession. For a few years it was occasionally of great use to him, and I shall mention several productions, that he began in his favorite room, but his health, already much enfeebled, allowed him not to realize in advanced life the magnificent projects of his enterprising fancy.

The weather during our residence in Paris had been extremely hot; this circumstance, with our incessant occupation there, and the bustle of our return had so encreased a bilious tendency in his constitution, that a few days repose in his favorite scene did not restore him, as usual, to the free and rapid use of his pencil. He hastened home and a part of his first let-

ter to me from London, may serve to shew how sensibly he felt the pitiable infirmities of his frame.

September 16, 1790.

My dear friend,

It is saying little to tell you of your kindness, when it required so much indulgence to bear with one, who labours under both a distempered mind and body, which was my case, while I rested under your hospitable roof. I hope your candour will forgive any irregularity of temper I might appear to be under during that period. I am still far from being well, either in body or mind.

What a comfort it is to find a friend, that will sympathise with one when pressed by afflictions! Believe me to be sincerely and affectionately your's,

G. R.

Almost all the afflictions, that pressed on my friend, through the course of his life might be considered, by many persons, as nothing more than imaginary afflictions, but there are none perhaps more entitled to compassion. What can be more truly pitiable, than to see great talents frequently rendered inactive by those wonderful variations in the nervous system, that throw a shadowy darkness over the mind, and fill it with phantoms of apprehension.

Romney was often harrassed by such troubles. The degree of comfort, that he took in the sympathy and indulgence of compassionate friendship, may be judged from the following passage in one of his letters.

May 3, 1791.

My dear friend,

Though I do not answer your kind letters so often as I could wish, yet I hope you will credit me, when I say it is a great gratification to me whenever you favor me with a line. But never more so than when my mind is labouring under some anxiety, and depression of spirits, which has indeed been the case with me for some time past.

If there is a quality in man that approaches to divine, or that predominates over every other, it is a tender commisseration administered to those under deep affliction, or when the mind is under some melancholy influence.

The health and spirits of Romney, were at this time so impaired, that he required indeed the most soothing attention of friendship. Like many other sufferers from that depressive disorder, hypochondria, he laboured under a frequent dread, that his talents would utterly desert him; and the following passage from a letter of this period, proves his depression to have been so severe, that he even thought of relinquish-

ing his pencil, greatly as it conduced to his fortune, to his pleasure, and to his renown.

After mentioning the accidental delay of my letters, and circumstances of his recent indisposition, he says:

In all probability, if my health be not equally good, I shall leave off business, and go abroad, but it will be a year or more, before I can settle my future plans.

I am obliged to you for the subjects you have pointed out, (from Shakespeare) for the present I have fixt on Joan la Pucelle making her incantation, and another I intend from her appearance on the walls of Rouen, with a torch in her hand.

An incident most seasonably occurred, which raised to joyous elevation the sinking spirits of the artist; for nature had given him a heart, that could most sincerely exult in the good fortune of those, he regarded. The fair Emma, whom he had so often painted with admiration and delight, surprised him by an early visit one morning in a Turkish habit, and attended by Sir William Hamilton.

Romney had ever treated her with the tenderness of a father, which she acknowledged on this occasion, with tears of lively gratitude, in announcing to him her splendid prospect of being soon married to Sir William, and of attending him to the Court of Naples.

Romney had conceived such very high ideas of the beauty, the talents and the heart of this lady, that I believe the joy of a father, in the brilliant marriage of a favorite daughter, could hardly exceed that of my friend on this occasion. In his letter dated the 19th of June, 1791, he says:

At present, and the greatest part of the summer, I shall be engaged in painting pictures from the divine lady. I cannot give her any other epithet, for I think her superior to all womankind. I have two pictures to paint of her for the Prince of Wales. She says she must see you, before she leaves England, which will be in the beginning of September. She asked me if you would not write my life:—I told her you had begun it:—then, she said, she hoped you would have much to say of her in the life, as she prided herself in being my model. So you see I must be in London till the time, when she leaves town.

Believe me to be, with the sincerest love to your house, ever your's,

G. R.

In another letter July the 7th, he says:

I dedicate my time to this charming lady; there is a prospect of her leaving town with Sir William, for two or three weeks. They are very much hurried at present, as every thing is going on for their speedy marriage, and all the world following her, and talking of her, so that if she had not more good sense, than vanity, her brain must be turned.

The pictures, I have begun, are Joan of Arc, a Magdalen, and a Bacchante, for the Prince of Wales; and another I am to begin as a companion to the Bacchante. I am also to paint a picture of Constance for the Shakespeare Gallery.

The weather has been so very hot, and my health so indifferent, that it has rendered me almost unable to write. I beg you will be so kind as to answer this soon, and believe me to be with the greatest sincerity and affection, &c.

His intended picture of Constance was, I believe, never begun, but his Joan of Arc had a countenance of most powerful expression. The head was thought one of the finest, that he ever painted from the features of his favorite model, and gave rise to the following

SONNET.

A bright attonement soothes that injured shade,
Who drew from Orleans her immortal fame:
Hark! hear you not the heroine exclaim?

"Now I renounce, by grateful honor swayed,
My fixt abhorrence of the English name:
Here I at last am worthily portrayed,
And for this tribute to my glory paid,
Forgive all past indignity and shame.
No more I deem this isle a savage clime:
Her chiefs to me were barbarously base,
And Shakespeare, of her lofty bards the prime,
Drew a faint copy of my soul sublime:
But, generous Romney, you my wrongs efface,
And crown my deathless form with dignity and grace."

I trust the good-natured reader will not be displeased in finding that I insert in this narrative a few occasional rhymes, which owed their origin to the delight I took in the pictures of Romney, and in a zealous wish to support and encourage the apprehensive spirits of my friend. It was a maxim with him that every modest and diffident artist ought to have almost a daily portion of chearing applause. He considered honest and temperate praise as the vital aliment of genius.

I never knew any mortal more feelingly alive to the influence both of commendation and of censure; of esteem, or of neglect. Even a shadow of coldness in the deportment of a person, from whom he expected great cordiality of regard, could almost paralyse his powers as a painter.

A striking instance of his extreme sensibility occurred at this time, when his spirits had been happily revived in contemplating the charms, the prosperity, and the friendship, of Lady Hamilton: for he was deprest again by a sudden and groundless apprehension of having lost her esteem. His letters at this period, display, in the clearest point of view, the singular acuteness of his feelings.

August 8, 1791.

My dear friend,

As you will probably wonder at my silence, it will be necessary to give you some account of the cause. In my last letter I think I informed you, that I was going to dine, with Sir William and his Lady. In the evening of that day, there were collected several people of fashion to hear her sing. She performed, both in the serious and comic, to admiration,

both in singing and acting; but her Nina surpasses every thing I ever saw, and I believe, as a piece of acting, nothing ever surpassed it. The whole company were in an agony of sorrow. Her acting is simple, grand, terrible, and pathetic. My mind was so much heated, that I was for running down to Eartham to fetch you up to see her. But alas! soon after, I thought I discovered an alteration in her conduct to me. A coldness and neglect seemed to have taken place of her repeated declarations of regard for me. They left town to make many visits in the country. I expect them again the latter end of this week, when my anxiety (for I have suffered very much) will be either relieved, or increased, as I find her conduct. It is highly probable, that none of the pictures will be finished, except I find her more friendly, than she appeared the last time I saw her. I had it in contemplation to run down for a day or two, before she returned to town, to bring you up with me, and I mentioned it to her. She said do so, but in a cold manner, though a fortnight before, when I said I would do so, she was very desirous that I should bring you to town. You will see every thing is in great uncertainty, but it may turn out better than I expect.

So far I had written before I received your kind letter, and now I have just time to give you a very short answer to it.

I shall certainly make you a visit, and I would rather visit you when you have no company.

Sir Richard Hoare has just brought from Rome a very fine design, from our friend Flaxman, for Collins's monument. You shall have it very soon. Believe me to be, with the sincerest affection,

Ever yours,

G. R.

As I was perfectly aware, how much the power of Romney to exercise his talents, depended on the tranquility of his mind, in the concerns of friendship, I sent him the following rhymes, entreating him to transcribe, and present them to the lady, with his own signature.

Gracious Cassandra! whose benign esteem,
To my weak talent every aid supplied;
Thy smile to me was inspiration's beam,
Thy charms my model, and thy taste my guide.

But say! what cruel clouds have darkly chill'd
Thy favor, that to me was vital fire?
O let it shine again! or worse than kill'd,
Thy soul-sunk artist feels his art expire.

These verses were kindly intended as a peace offering, but the tender and generous spirit of the painter had, without their assistance, completely dissipated that little vapour of imaginary disregard,

which had clouded the intercourse between him, and his admirable model.

His next letter describes the success of his own friendly pencil, in producing an event so essential to his comfort.

Monday Evening, August 29, 1791.

My dear friend,

I have not had it in my power to write any satisfactory answer to your first letter, till within these few days. Cassandra came to town the 16*th. and I did not see her till the* 20*th. so you may suppose how my feelings must have suffered; she appointed to sit on the* 23*d. and has been sitting almost every day since; and means to sit once or twice a day, till she leaves London, which will be about Wednesday or Thursday, in the next week.*

When she arrived to sit, she seemed more friendly than she had been, and I began a picture of her, as a present for her mother. I was very successful with it; for it is thought the most beautiful head, I have painted of her yet. Now indeed, I think, she is as cordial with me as ever; and she laments very much, that she is to leave England without seeing you.

I take it excessively kind in you to enter so deeply into my distresses. Really my mind had suffered so very much, that my health was much affected, and I was afraid, I should not have had power to have painted any more from her; but since she has resumed her former kindness, my health and spirits are quite recovered.

She performed in my house last week, singing and acting before some of the nobility with most astonishing powers: she is the talk of the whole town, and really surpasses every thing both in singing and acting, that ever appeared. Gallini offered her two thousand pounds a year, and two benefits, if she would engage with him, on which Sir William said pleasantly, that he had engaged her for life.

Believe me yours most affectionately,

G. R.

After taking an affectionate leave of his two kind friends, who quitted London for Naples, Romney hastened to Eartham; but in his ardour and anxiety to paint as many pictures, as he possibly could, from Lady Hamilton, before she left England, he had laboured beyond his strength, and on his arrival at his favorite scene both of repose, and study, he required much rest and care. His health was too much impaired to allow him to participate in our usual salutary amusement of sea-bathing; but the marine air contributed to his restoration; and the commencement of the first letter, which he sent to Sussex on his return to London, before the end of October, thus exprest, what no man could feel more tenderly, a cordial gratitude for the common kind offices of friendship.

In the first place I must try to express to you the high sense I have of your kindness to me while in Sussex. Indeed it contributed greatly to the recovery of my shattered and feeble frame, which I shall never forget. I hope in a few days to be able to bring my mind into the old trammels of drudgery, though it appears horrible to me to take up the trifling part of my profession.

I find by an advertisement that Cowper is concerned in the management of Fuseli's Milton.

A correspondence with Cowper, concerning this intended Milton, led me gradually into perfect intimacy with the exquisite poet of Weston, and justly regarding the friendship of that excellent person as an invaluable blessing, I was eager to share it with Romney: but my wish and my endeavour to make the poet and the artist personally known to each other, will find their proper place among the occurrences of the year 1792. Before I take leave of 1791, I have yet to notice a passage in the letters of Romney, that shews the improvement of his health, and the occupation of his pencil.

Soon after his return to London, I heard that Madame de Genlis intended to favor me with a visit at Eartham, on her road to Bath. I immediately re-

quested Romney to rejoin, and assist me in entertaining the friend, to whose kind attentions to us in Paris we had been so agreeably indebted. I transcribe a part of his reply.

I have received your kind letter, and am happy to find Madame de Genlis is to pay you a visit in her way to Bath. I wish it was in my power to pay my respects to her at your charming villa, but alas! it is totally out of my power. Many reasons prevent my leaving London at this time. Moreover I am now set in for study. I have made a large composition from Milton, and I wish to keep my mind fixt to that work as much as possible. I hope you will have influence enough to persuade Madame de Genlis to pass through London in her return, and then I shall have time I hope to do something worthy of notice from her and Pamela.

I had reason to rejoice that my friend did not quit his interesting studies on this occasion, as the lady was obliged to hasten immediately to Bath without visiting Sussex; and the commencement of the following year afforded him an opportunity of employing his friendly pencil, according to his wishes in pictures of which he speaks in his subsequent letters.

I have still to record, that Romney, in closing the year 1791, afforded me a new proof, with what

pleasure, spirit, and success, he could employ his pencil in kind offices of friendship. On my hastening to London, in December, to meet my son, a child in his eleventh year, then returning from a visit to a very dear friend in Derbyshire, the kind artist exerted himself in rapidly finishing a fanciful portrait of the little traveller, whom he had loved from his infancy, and whom he painted as the Fairy, Robin Good-Fellow, of Shakespeare flying on a cloud, and crowned with a chaplet of the flower, which Oberon had commissioned him to find. This portrait was a favorite work of the painter; and it certainly did him honor, not only as a strong and pleasing resemblance, but still more as a work of liberality, and affection.

The commencement of the year 1792, was a propitious season to Romney. It improved his health, and enlivened his spirits by affording him chearful opportunities of displaying his gratitude towards those accomplished ladies of Paris, whose kind civilities to him, as a stranger in *their* country, he was happy to acknowledge and return in *his* own: a pleasure which

several perverse incidents, and a severe illness precluded me from sharing personally with my friend. In a letter dated January 24, 1792, after naming Madame de Genlis, and her young companions, he mentions his having attended them repeatedly to the play-house.

In his next letter, the 28th of the same month, he says:

I am painting two pictures of Pamela, and I think they will be both beautiful. As they are two different views of her face, one of course will be better than the other, and I shall give Madame de Genlis her choice of them.

The artist was never able to accomplish his grateful intention; for these pictures shared the destiny, that attended an innumerable multitude of works from the same over-busied hand. They were never even half finished, and the portrait, which he also began at this time of Madame de Genlis herself, remained a mere sketch. In that state he presented it to me, at a time, when he had ceased to paint, as a memorial of the great pleasure we had derived from

our acquaintance with the admirable original. The countenance was happily finished with great truth and spirit. It has been engraved so worthily, by a female artist, distinguished by the delicacy of her works, that I trust the portrait will gratify the numerous admirers of an authoress, whose features have a full share of that sense and sensibility, which have given the most extensive success to her many elegant and instructive publications.

It is peculiarly delightful to find the talents of an eminent writer, whose compositions have been favorites of the public for several years, bursting, like the latter magnificence of a suspended firework, into new forms of brilliancy, surpassing the fondest expectation.

I eagerly embrace this opportunity of expressing the very great pleasure I have received from a recent production of Madame de Genlis, in 1808. Her fertile and powerful fancy has surpassed itself in her "*Siege de la Rochelle.*" She has there delineated a



Madame de Genlis.

Engraved by Caroline Watson (engraver to Her Majesty) from the original Picture

Published April 14th 1809, by Thomas Payne Pall Mall

young Christian heroine, with all the energy, and all the tenderness of description, that genius and piety inspire. It is hardly possible to name any romance, in which the sentiments of the author, and the conduct of the story, are more happily suited to elevate the mind, and to satisfy the heart.

But I return to the year 1792. In February Romney communicated to me a most friendly letter, which he had just received from Naples: Sir William and Lady Hamilton, invited him in the kindest manner to share with them the pleasures of a country so singularly attractive to the lovers of antient art. They expressed an anxious desire to promote the improvement of his tender health, and the progress of his favorite study, in a climate, where their own situation would enable them to render his residence agreeable.

Romney was highly pleased by the cordiality of this invitation, which extended to his friend of Sussex. The variety of his engagements rendered him unable

to accept it; but he answered it with the sincerest gratitude, and informed the lady, that he was preparing to distribute, according to her directions, the several fancy-pictures, which he had been so eager to execute from her expressive features, before she left England. The Cassandra was already sent to the Shakespeare Gallery, the Calypso and the Magdalen were soon to be sent home to the Prince, and the maid of Orleans (perhaps the finest head of the collection) was to be finished in the first favorable season, but this imaginary season never arrived. Romney too frequently deluded his fancy with a large expected share of future leisure; and he began such a multitude of works, that had he attained the length of days allotted to an antedeluvian, he would hardly have had time to finish more than half of what he had begun. In the spring of this year he expressed an eager desire of painting the banquet scene in Macbeth for the Shakespeare Gallery, but suspecting that the proprietors of the Gallery were not inclined to encourage his intention, though he often employed himself in slight sketches of the subject, I



Cassandra

Engraved by Caroline Watson (engraver to Her Majesty) from the original Picture.

Published April 14th 1809 by Thomas Payne, Pall Mall.

The following letter will shew that Romney was well disposed to entertain a high personal regard for Cowper; and that he also possessed a large portion of that sympathetic tenderness of spirit, which peculiarly distinguished the poet of Weston.

June 30, 1792.

My dear friend,

Your very kind letter found me much better, and did not add a little to hasten my recovery, as my spirits are always a part of my complaints.

I can tell you now, that I am very near well. I only want a little country air, and quiet, to set me up. But I cannot accept your kind offer, and invitation: I have a great deal of work to do before I can stir from town. If ever I worship an allegorical divinity, it shall be kindness—O! it pours a balm into the mind, that softens the greatest misery!

You introduced my mind to a new acquaintance; and I feel from your manner of introduction much interested for that ideal friend, as much as if I had spent much time in his company. Indeed I cannot help being anxious about a character of so extraordinary a kind. But I must close.

Most sincerely yours,

G. R.

July 16, 1792.

My dear friend,

You have much consoled me by your kindness in your last letter; and I shall disentangle myself from business, as soon as I can, to reap the benefit of your indulgence. I had not time to thank you in

my last. I assure you I feel very sensibly for every neglect, I am guilty of in letter-writing, and never have I suffered more than for my neglect of our dear and worthy Flaxman, whose talents I admire, and place above every other artist. I am pleased with your account of the Knight of Bognor, but cannot engage to paint his portrait in the country. However I am obliged to the Knight for his civility. Be so good as to thank him for his kindness!

My health is much recovered. I go out much in the open air, which I always find the best physic.

Of the time I purpose staying with you I think of dedicating a part to retirement in the painting room upon the hill, as I have found I could think better there than any where else. Believe me most sincerely and affectionately yours,

G. R.

It was a general rule of my friend to decline all professional commissions during his residence in the country. Hence he excused himself from complying with the request of Sir Richard Hotham: but he was pleased with the chearful adventurous disposition of that commercial knight, whom he afterwards painted at full length in London. The picture may be regarded as one of his happiest performances in fidelity of resemblance, and in the ease, spirit, and harmony of the whole composition.

The following letter is an answer to one in which I had informed my correspondent, that Cowper and his venerable companion were safely arrived at Eartham.

Monday, August 6, 1792.

My dear friend,

I am quite delighted to find you have got those interesting beings under your hospitable roof whom you idolize so much. I hope such a meeting will contribute to your mutual health and happiness. I also hope it will not be long, before I shall have the happiness of joining you. Indeed I thought of setting forward the beginning of this week; but I have had a slight indisposition: however now I am better, and you may probably see me in a few days. I wish to leave town soon, as I intend returning in September, for I am very anxious to set about something seriously of importance on my return; and I think September one of the best months in the year for working.

I certainly do not visit you with an intention to play, but to study. Yet if you have plenty of room, I do not see why I should object to Carwardine's being with us at the same time. If you want room, I can sleep at Bognor.

I have been very deep in study for some time past. I have gone every morning to Kilburn to breakfast, which contributed much to my health, and to the production of a great many of my best studies.

I am with the sincerest affection to all around you,

Ever yours,

G. R.

The friendly artist had formed very high expectations of the pleasure, he should receive from residing under the same roof with the poet of Weston; and he was so far from being disappointed, that in a few days after his arrival he agreed with me entirely, in thinking, that the genius, the benevolence, and the misfortunes of Cowper, gave such a peculiar sweetness and sanctity to his character as rendered his society delightful in the highest degree. Romney was eager to execute a portrait of a person so memorable, and in drawing it he was peculiarly desirous of making the nearest approach to life, that he possibly could: for this purpose he chose to make use of coloured crayons, a mode of painting in which he had indeed little experience; but he possessed that happy versatility of talent, which gave him an appearance of having been long familiar with any process of art, that he had an inclination to try. He worked with uncommon diligence, zeal, and success, producing a resemblance so powerful, that spectators who contemplated the portrait with the original by its side,

thought it hardly possible for any similitude to be more striking, or more exact. Romney wished to express what he often saw in studying the features of Cowper.

"*The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling.*"

And I think he expressed it without over-stepping the modesty of truth and nature, but some persons, and ladies in particular, more conversant with the colloquial, than with the poetic countenance of Cowper, have supposed Romney's portrait of him to border on extravagance of expression.

Painters are said to infuse into all their portraits some portion of themselves; and it is possible that Romney may have super-added a little of his own wildness and fire to the native enthusiasm of the poet, whom he so zealously portrayed: yet after scrutinizing it for many years, with eyes as impartial, as friendship may pretend to, I regard the portrait in question as one of the most masterly, and most faithful, resemblances that I ever beheld. Indeed it was painted

literally *con amore* (to use the technical expression applied to the happiest works of art) for Romney had conceived a most sincere affection for his new acquaintance. Any person of moderate sensibility, in residing a few weeks with Cowper, must have been cordially attached to him. Romney had feelings of peculiar acuteness, and generosity, in favor of genius struggling with misfortunes. He always treated it with a most tender and compassionate respect. He had opportunities this year at Eartham of displaying this laudable characteristic of his heart, not only towards the poet of Weston, but also towards a celebrated poetess of our county, whose calamities, tho' different from those of Cowper, yet entitled her likewise to pity and admiration; I allude to Charlotte Smith, who came to us from Brighton to seize an opportunity of forming an acquaintance with Cowper. She exerted her talents most agreeably to excite his wonder, and conciliate his esteem; for happening to have begun one of her novels, the Old Manor House, she devoted the early part of the day to composition

in her own apartment, and entertained the little party at Eartham, by reading to them in the evening, whatever the fertility of her fancy had produced in the course of a long studious morning.

This admirable lady had a quickness of invention, and a rapidity of hand, which astonished every witness of her abilities. Cowper repeatedly declared, that he knew no man, among his early associates in literature, some of whom piqued themselves on rapid composition, who could have composed so rapidly and so well. The exquisite faculties of the unhappy Charlotte were naturally quick; and perhaps their natural quickness was heightened by a laudable ambition of shining before such a judge of talents as Cowper, who possessed in the highest degree, both acuteness, and candour. It was a recreation, peculiarly sweet after a busy morning, to hear the novelist read the new pages of her work; for she read, as she wrote, with simplicity and grace. Romney, who had long admired her genius, and pitied her troubles, was delighted to find her still capable of such mental activity

under such a load of misfortunes, and testified his esteem for her writings by executing a portrait of the authoress. This he drew also in coloured crayons. It has a plaintive air and it is certainly an expressive likeness, but it was unavoidably a work of haste, and therefore, as a production of art, it is by no means equal to his more studied portrait of Cowper.

Romney himself considered his portrait of Cowper as the nearest approach that he had ever made to a perfect representation of life and character. He had in general, rather an excess of modesty, in estimating the merit of his own works, but his predilection for this favorite performance was naturally raised by the intense, yet pleasant labour he bestowed upon it, and still more by its giving rise to the poetical honor, that he received in the sonnet addrest to him by Cowper, which, though it has appeared already in the life of its author, cannot, without an injury to the artist, be omitted in this volume.

SONNET,

TO

GEORGE ROMNEY, Esq.

Romney! expert infallibly to trace
On chart, or canvas, not the form alone,
And 'semblance, but however faintly shewn
The mind's impression too on every face,
With strokes, that time ought never to erase,
Thou hast so pencil'd mine, that though I own
The subject worthless, I have never known
The artist shining with superior grace.
But this I mark, that symptoms none of woe
In thy incomparable work appear:
Well! I am satisfied it should be so,
Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear;
For in my looks what sorrow could'st thou see,
While I was Hayley's guest, and sat to thee.

W. C.

It is with a melancholy gratification, that I dwell on the remembrance of social and friendly joys, which the grave has suspended, though I trust not for ever

extinguished. The painter and the poet, so kindly just to each other, were not only animated in their days of health with similar sensibility, but resembled each other in one most affecting circumstance of their mortal pilgrimage, it was the destiny of each to lose the use of his enchanting faculties, before his departure: or to cite a most expressive verse of Churchill.

"*To sit the monument of living death.*"

They were both such delightful associates in their happier days, that in the wane of life I cannot but feel their loss as irreparable.

The regret attending this conviction is most effectually soothed by the hope, that I may a little contribute "to keep their memories green on the earth," by tender and faithful records of those particular talents and virtues in each, which excited my constant solicitude for the welfare of both, during many years, and rendered them objects for ever of my indelible affection.

In one very endearing quality they were particularly similar; I mean in quick, and deep sensations of gratitude for even the most simple offices of kindness from a friend. The letters of Romney, even when they consisted of very few lines, never failed to shew the uncommon tenderness of his feelings.

London, September 8, 1792.

My dear friend,

After thanking you for your great kindness to me in your Paradise, I can inform you I arrived safe here, but cannot say much for my health. Many unpleasant professional circumstances rushing upon my mind, may perhaps have operated too strongly on my frame. In a little time when more familiarized with the drudgery of my profession, my health may be better.

The accounts to day from France are dreadful: all the priests that were confined are murdered, perhaps the city of Paris is at this time in flames. I am so agitated with the tremendous situation of that poor Country, I am not able to do any thing.

Remember me kindly to your most agreeable party, and believe me most sincerely and affectionately yours.

G. R.

A return to portrait-painting in London, from studies of excursive fancy, and from a rural scene of friendship, was ever as painful to Romney, as the day

of returning into school to a delicate child. His sufferings on these occasions, though poignant, were short, like the sorrow of the child:

" *The tear forgot as soon as shed.*"

In the course of a few days he said with recovered spirits:

I have only a few minutes to answer your kind letter, and tell you how much I am flattered by the kind remembrance of your amiable guests. Remember me very kindly to all under your roof. Thank God I am in better health, and hard at work, to get clear of the trumpery things, that stand in my way.

He was eager

" *To daft the world aside and bid it pass.*"

With an anxious desire to employ himself in painting on a large scale, and with great care and study the banquet scene in Macbeth, which at this time greatly occupied his fancy, though as I have before observed, on a former occasion, he never ad-

vanced in the picture. In the year 1792, if indisposition too often checked his hand, his imagination was remarkably active. It was in the springof this year that he began his admired picture of Milton and his daughters, a kind of painting that seems to hold a middle rank between portrait and history. He had, peculiar talents for giving interest and dignity, to scenes of familiar life, and he had it in contemplation to form a series of pictures of a similar kind, each containing some illustrious character of our country. His Newton, displaying the prismatic colours, (a picture engraved by the permission of the Reverend John Romney to decorate this volume) was the second, and the last subject of this intended series, that he actually painted. Two others in contemplation were Lord Bacon and Sir Christopher Wren, the philosopher collecting snow for an experiment, the architect carried by his servant, in his old age, according to his annual custom, into the centre of Saint Paul's, and raising himself on his litter to take a contemplative and devout survey of the magnificent temple he had built. This is a subject, that Romney would have painted

with peculiar felicity, for in his serious hours his heart was uncommonly full of devotional tenderness. But these with a thousand other projects of art, that floated in the busy mind of my friend, were destined to perish without being so fortunate as to assume the shapes, that he hoped to give them.

I have already observed, that the year 1792, had a peculiar influence on the fancy and professional feelings of Romney; an influence, that might partly originate from an event, universally affecting, which happened in the second month of the year in question: I mean the decease of his illustrious contemporary, and precursor in art, Sir Joshua Reynolds, who closed a very industrious, and highly honorable life amidst the regret, and applause, of the nation, that his taste had refined, and his labours embellished.

My affectionate intimacy with the most successful rival of this great artist was so far from rendering me insensible or unfriendly to the various merits of his

mild, yet effulgent character, that the sight of his death in the newspaper, drew from me on the instant, the following brief but cordial tribute to his memory.

Peace to HIS *dust, and honor to* HIS *name,*
Who first to English art gave life, and fame!
Whose pencil round the brow of Britain spread
A glory, wanting to her hallow'd head!
While memory, Reynolds! to thy merit true,
Recalls thy words, and works, in fond review,
Endearing excellence in all we trace:
Thy life urbanity! thy labours grace!

Genius! and virtue! your just sorrows blend!
Mourn the lost artist! and revere the friend!
Deem his rare length of days a span too brief!
And consecrate his praise by public grief!
Ye angels, duly by his hand portray'd,
Protect the fame of him, ye deign'd to aid!
Who duteously employ'd what God had given,
And made his talents minister to heaven!

Romney had a very sincere respect for the talents, and the reputation of Reynolds. A little anecdote, recorded by a pupil of the former, which will appear in this volume, may sufficiently shew the spirit, with which he rejected an excess of commendation offered to himself at the expence of the brother artist, whom he modestly deemed his superior.

I will not exclaim with the sportive gaiety of Lord Thurlow, "I am of the Romney faction," or endeavour in the zeal of partial attachment, to exalt my friend above the great founder of English art, but with a deep and a grateful sense of the delight I have received in contemplating the productions, and the excellencies of both, I will here indulge myself in a few observations on some opposite peculiarities of character in these memorable men.

We may consider an ardent and powerful imagination, acute and delicate sensibility, and a passion for study, as the three qualities peculiarly essential towards

forming a great artist. Of these three important endowments, I believe, nature to have bestowed a larger portion on Romney than on Reynolds; but in her bounty to the latter she added some inestimable qualities, which more than turned the scale in his favor. They rendered him pre-eminent in three great objects of human pursuit, in fortune, in felicity, and in fame.

She gave her favorite, what his friend and biographer, Mr. Malone, has described as the *mitis sapientia Lœli*, that mild and serene wisdom, which enables a man to exert whatever talents he possesses with the fullest and happiest effect. She gave him the securest panoply against the arrows of wordly contention, highly-polished good humour, which conciliates universal esteem; and disarms, if it does not annihilate, that envious malevolence, which genius and prosperity are so apt to excite. Doctor Johnson very truly said of Reynolds, that he was the most invulnerable of men; but of Romney it might be said, with equal truth, that a man could hardly exist, whom it was more easy to wound.

His imagination was so tremblingly alive, that even a slight appearance of coldness in a friend, or of hostility in a critic, was sometimes sufficient to suspend or obstruct the exertion of his finer faculties.

Had it been possible for Romney to have united a dauntless and invariable serenity of mind to such feelings and powers, as he possessed, when his nerves were happily free from all vexatious irritation, I am persuaded he would have risen to a degree of excellence in art superior to what has hitherto been displayed; for painting, though we justly celebrate some very glorious characters among the many, who have profest and ennobled it; has never been so honored, and so cultivated, as to reach those points of perfection, which it is capable of attaining, but which, we have reason to fear, it never will attain, because they can hardly be reached without a favorable coincidence of many most improbable circumstances in the fortune of nations, and in the destiny of individuals.

Both Reynolds and Romney had the misfortune

to begin their career under the heavy disadvantage of very imperfect professional education. Several works of both may be thought to verify the latter part of a penetrating remark, by Mr. Shee, in contrasting the painters of France and of England. Of the first he says—" They are timorous combatants, who exhaust their powers in preparation, and chill the ardour of enterprize by their coldness of precaution.—We on the other hand are often rash adventurers, who plunge into dangers against which we have not provided, and rush into the field before we are sufficiently armed for the fight.,'

Yet considering the various impediments that both Reynolds and Romney had to surmount, the degree of excellence that each attained in their happiest productions is highly honorable to the genius of our country and ought to endear the memories of both to every lover of art. In estimating the merits of Reynolds, we ought never to forget the deplorably abject condition of the arts in our country, when he began his career. In the early part of the last century it

was acknowledged, that nothing could be found, which seemed to deserve the title of English art. There is a letter concerning Design, written at Naples in the year 1712, by the philosophical Lord Shaftesbury, who was extremely fond of pictures, in which he says:— "as to painting, we have as yet nothing of our own native growth, in this kind, worthy of being mentioned." Yet at that time the penetration, and the patriotic spirit of this contemplative nobleman led him to predict, that his country would gradually form for herself a taste in all the fine arts, superior to that of the great rival nation, in which a despotic and ostentatious monarch had recently affected every kind of pre-eminence.

It was the opinion of this noble author, and it seems to be an opinion, in which his active fancy did not overpower his judgment, that to the arts, the voice of the people is the breath of life. "There can be no public (he says) where the people are not included; and without a public voice, knowingly guided, and di-

rected, there is nothing which can raise a true ambition in the artist; nothing which can exalt the genius of the workman, or make him emulous of after-fame, of the approbation of his country, and of posterity." He therefore thought it an advantage to England, that she had settled her government on the noble principles of freedom, before she began to cultivate her native talents for the pencil. Such a public voice, as this celebrated writer justly considered of so much importance, has been gradually formed in our country, in the course of the last century, and of all individuals Reynolds may be regarded as having contributed the most, by the united influence of his pictures and his writings, to its formation, and to its guidance.

The decease of Reynolds, as I have intimated in noticing that event, rather quickened than relaxed the ambition of Romney. He felt all the merits of his great departed predecessor, and was anxious so to employ the precarious residue of his own impaired health, that he also might hope for a considerable portion of posthumous regard. These words recall to my recol-

lection a peculiar tenderness of admiration, with which Romney contemplated an exquisite engraving of Sir Joshua's portrait, prefixed to the quarto edition of his works, in 1797. The praise, which my friend bestowed on that interesting print, engraved by Caroline Watson, induced me to engage this very delicate artist in decorating the present volume.

But it is time to terminate a long digression by returning to the course of my narrative, in 1792. My latest letter from Romney of that year has the following passage:

November 10.

I have not yet advanced Milton much, but am engaged on some other things of fancy. I am just now in treaty for a piece of ground to build a painting room.

This I believe is the earliest intimation of a purpose, that afforded Romney, for some years, abundance of disquietude, and also of amusement.

He wished to have a commodious painting room

on a very extensive scale, within the distance of two or three miles from London, and as his fancy delighted in magnificent visions, he often pleased himself with an idea of forming a domestic academy, and of proving a beneficent foster-father to juvenile artists. The course of this narrative will shew what steps he took towards accomplishing an idea so delightful in contemplation to a benevolent spirit, but so difficult to realize with success.

In his first letter of the following year, 1793, he mentions a circumstance, which he considered as a step towards his favorite project of forming a domestic academy. I mean the importation of many casts from antient statues, which he had desired Mr. Flaxman to send him from Rome. A commission executed with equal judgment and kindness.

January 5, 1793.

My dear friend,

I had it not in my power to answer your kind letter immediately; I thank you and my dear Tom for your joint kindness in sending me descriptions of the picturesque prison scenes which will produce new ideas in my mind.

I hope you will not forget how such kindness affects me, and how useful I find those subjects for art, that you send me. Indeed these came very opportunely for——had said something rather coarse to me, which wounded me very deeply, as it touched my hobby horse, and my ambition. He accused me of neglecting my portraits, and of vanity in doing things that do not turn to account. O what a damper! he likes money better than fame: but no more! I am afraid I am troublesome: you will see I have been wounded, and excuse me.

My plaister figures are unpacked, and I am charmed with them, both for the choice, and the perfection of the casts. I shall have one of the finest Museums in London for antique sculpture.

I hope you preserve your health. I remember you ever with the greatest kindness.

G. R.

I had several letters from my old friend in the early part of this year, expressing his gratitude to me, or to my son, for having sent him hints for new pictures. Of these, although he had no leisure to execute them, he had ever an insatiable desire. Closing a letter in February, he says:

I have no news to acquaint you with, but I write because I hope it may be some gratification to you; and more for the gratification of receiving your kind answers; when you can send me a hint for a picture, you encrease my pleasure in a great degree.

The following passage from a subsequent letter will shew the tenderness of his feelings towards a brother artist.

April 22, 1793.

I am much delighted in hearing that Wright (of Derby) is recovered from his long and melancholy indisposition; I wish you would write to him, and encourage him, as you may be assured nothing will be more grateful to a sick mind, and tell him how happy I am to hear of his recovery.

In June he spoke with equal liberality and kindness of another artist, alluding to a wish, I had expressed, that Romney and Hodges, and Cowper might engage together in some considerable confederate work. Little did I suppose, when I suggested the idea, that such dark calamities were impending over two of those excellent men, as must render the suggestion utterly impracticable. Romney alludes with his usual kindness in the following letter to a visit, that I had received from our friend Hodges, on his excursion to Sussex, for the purpose of drawing views of Bognor, for Sir Richard Hotham.

June 14, 1793.

My dear friend,

I am very much delighted with the mutual satisfaction you and Hodges have expressed in the pleasant hours you have spent together, and hope it will be the cause of some new work. Your humble servant will be glad to lend his hand to any work within his power. I told you before that I had new plans in my mind; and I am now putting them into execution: I have taken lodgings in a new garden ground, on the Kilburn road, where I breakfast every morning, and where I work two hours in advancing my designs (for my series of large pictures) I have advanced them very much, and expect to complete them before summer is over. I have formed a plan of building a painting room, which perhaps may be the first stone of a theatre, as it may join to a plan of that sort, when I wish to take it up. Indeed spending my mornings in this way, has led me to form various schemes and plans, which neither you, nor any body else would suppose.

Believe me ever yours,

G. R.

Though Romney had great muscular strength, and an anxious desire to take all proper care of that inestimable blessing, health, yet, from the ardour of his mind, he was continually apt to persevere in labour to a perilous excess. This frequently happened in the beginning of summer, when he was usually pressed to finish many pictures; and when the commencement of hot weather rendered him less able to

bear any extraordinry exertion. The following account of his feelings, was written when he had hurt himself in that manner, without suspecting the source of the mischief.

July 6, 1793.

My dear friend,

You delight me much with the account you give me of your equestrian exercise, and the effect it has had on your health and spirits. You oblige me much with your kind recommendation for me to pursue the same plan. I would pursue any plan to enjoy health and spirits, if it was ever so laborious, for I have been so overcome, with lassitude, that I had not power to do any thing, though not ill. I should be happy, (if I could accomplish it) to partake in your amusements, and accept your very kind invitation; but there are obstacles to prevent my visiting you till—I cannot say when. Excuse me I have not strength to proceed farther; yet believe me,

Your most affectionate friend,

G. R.

The over-laboured artist soon began to revive as the following letter will agreeably prove.

July 18, 1793.

My dear friend,

Your kind letter relieved me very much. I rejoice to find that you are to have the illustrious historian, Gibbon, shortly your guest. I most ardently wish I could make one of the triumvirate. Alas! I cannot stir, but you will hear from me again, in a post or two, and then I can give you a more certain account of what I shall, or must do.

I rejoice also to find our dear Flaxman's drawings from Homer are arrived.. Clarke informed me so to day, and you may be certain, that I shall see them as soon as possible. Clarke dines with me to day, I like him much.

I am glad to hear the pleasing account of the tender-minded Cowper; and am delighted that he enters into the spirit of your schemes; may Providence prosper them! but I do not yet know the character of these sublimely intended works, yet I am flattered with the prospect of sharing in them. I continue to go to my little villa to breakfast, and make designs every morning, which has been a delightful relief this hot weather. I have eight children to wait on me, and fine ones. I begin to feel the necessity of having these innocent little spirits about one, they give more soft delight to the mind than I can describe to soften the steps down declining life.

Adieu!

G. R.

This letter may confirm a remark, that I formerly made, concerning the peculiar interest and delight, which Romney took in the contemplation of promising children. His eight fairy attendants were the offspring of the honest couple, in whose humble, but pleasant, habitation, he had hired a room to breakfast in, at seven shillings and sixpence a week. But his cheap lodging proved a source of such expence, and of such delight, to him, as he little expected. It happened that he was one morning surprized by finding some

of his little chearful fairies in tears. On searching into the source of their affliction, he discovered, that their industrious father was in immediate danger of sinking under the burthen of so numerous a family, (and of losing the pleasant spot, where his labour had promised him a comfortable livelihood) unless he could speedily raise the sum of two hundred pounds, which the poor afflicted man considered as an impossibility. But the kind heart of Romney felt itself commissioned by Heaven to be the protector of meritorious indigence. He instantly relieved his honest humble host from the most bitter embarrassment, and found his future breakfasts on that spot inexpressibly delicious, it being sweetened by the cordial benedictions of a very interesting family, whom he had rescued from distress. The charity of Romney was not only great, but genuine; for it was often conducted with absolute privacy, and never with ostentation.

But to return to the series of his letters. A continuation of extracts from these, will afford a clear insight into the heart and mind of a man, who had

received from nature, that inestimable, though perilous gift, extreme sensibility. A display of his primary characteristic, can hardly fail to interest in his favor the feelings of those, who read with a lively regard for the excellencies, and with compassion for the infirmities of human nature.

August 2, 1793.

My dear friend,

You have a right to blame me for my delay, but if you knew how much trouble I have lately had, you would excuse me.

I have seen the book of prints for the Odyssey, by our dear and admirable artist Flaxman. They are outlines without shadow, but in the style of antient art. They are simple, grand, and pure; I may say with truth very fine. They look as if they had been made in the age, when Homer wrote. I must answer the other parts of your letter, when I have the pleasure of visiting you, which I hope for soon.

August 12.

Your great kindness and attention have enlivened my drooping spirits. I long to hasten down to you, and tell you all my feelings and complaints, and to strip myself of drudgery in the shabby part of my art, for a while at least; and I should be happy if I could do without ever taking it up again. I cannot yet say what day I can move.

The tender artist arrived at Eartham in a few

days after the date of this billet; and remained with me till near the middle of September; chiefly intent on the improvement of his very delicate health, by air and exercise, and contenting himself with a moderate use of his pencil, in a few excursions of fancy.

The description of his approach to London, in his first letter after his return, is at once a picture of the scenes he passed through and of his own contemplative spirit.

September, 1793.

My dear friend,

It was some time, after I parted from you, before I recovered from the grateful impression, your kindness and hospitality had made on my mind; and before I was able to contemplate the passing objects, and change of scenery.

The variety was great; and the approach to London affected me in various ways. I observed a sharpness of countenance in the people I met; with passions so strongly marked, I suppose none could mistake. Deep design, disappointed ambition, envy, hatred, melancholy, disease and poverty.

These appearances one is for ever meeting in the skirts of London; not like the Sussex Peasants, with faces round with health, and expressions of contentment every where.

The square and parti-coloured appearance of the buildings, the variety of noises, and bustle had a very unpleasant effect on my senses; and now I am

arrived, how hard I have found it to reconcile my mind, so relaxed with the beautiful scenes of Eartham, to the old habits of mechanical drudgery.

I find myself not well, ever since I left you, but hope to be better in a few days; as I have now been at work, and find I can proceed in my old way. What a thing is habit!

Let me hear from you soon, I am with affectionate gratitude for your tenderness to me. Yours,

G. R.

The following is a striking proof of that singular sensibility, which I regarded as the source of his enchanting talents, and which I sometimes wished to moderate, when its excesses appeared likely to injure his comfort and his health. The spot which he frequently mentions by the name of Pine-apple Place, was the scene of his rural breakfasts.

Monday Evening, Sept. 19, 1793.

My dear friend,

At ten o'clock I returned from Pine Apple Place. The first thing I asked for was a letter—No!—I waited till eleven, an hour beyond the usual time.—No letter.—I was so much overpowered with disappointment, that I resolved not to work. Indeed I could not.—How much it is in your power to torment me. I was afraid you were offended with me. The joyful letter arrived at half past eleven. The agitation it caused, and the tender circumstances of the christening at Petworth, and the pleasant day you passed, had a very singular effect on my spirits. I am now sorry I did not remain with you some days longer, to have joined in your festivity.

Apropos to all this, and perhaps in consequence of this! My Lord Egremont called on me on Saturday last, and expressed his concern at not having seen me, when I was in his neighbourhood. He said he would have employed me to paint two or three pictures; and enquired, when I thought of visiting your country again. I said, I believed next summer, and that I should be happy to shew every attention to his wishes. I am at a loss to know whether his Lordship can postpone what he wished me to do, till another season; at present I cannot stir. I am earnestly set in for work. You will be kind enough to let me know all you know, and all you think of this affair.

Pray say every thing to Cowper for me. I have begun two pictures, since I returned, both in the Corregiesque style.

It was a favorite object of Romney's ambition to place some production of his own pencil among the several fine works of art, that adorn the magnificent villa of Petworth. Its noble possessor not only expressed esteem for his talents, but in a future year, received and treated him as a friend, by shewing the most indulgent attention to the infirmities of his guest. I have seen tears of gratitude in the eyes of Romney, when he mentioned the kindness of Lord Egremont, in offering to have a warm-bath of sea-water prepared for him at Petworth.

But to return to the letters of my friend. I shall not suppress, in the following, some expressions of excessive partiality to me, because if they do no credit to his judgment, they still reflect honor on the warmth of his heart. The reader will perceive that they flowed from the immediate feelings of genuine kindness, and not from any intention to flatter, though it is evident, that the commendation far exceeded the desert of the person commended: but the noblest minds are most apt to over-rate the little services of those they love, and a friendly spirit is perpetually subject to such pardonable and endearing illusion.

London, October 11, 1793.

My dear friend,

I must answer your first kind letter by telling you, I am much concerned to hear you have suffered in your eyes. I hope they are recovered, as I do not know any calamity so teizing, particularly to you, as one of your greatest pleasures is derived from objects, that pass through those delicate organs to the imagination. I am delighted with the ideas you have suggested. I must say you are more happy in forming in your mind subjects suitable for pictures, than all the men of learning and taste, I ever met with, put together. I shall be ever grateful for those you have suggested at various times for my improvement and pleasure, and request you will never neglect me in that point.

Hodges has brought with him from Russia, drawings of some admirable subjects for pictures. I endeavoured to persuade him to visit you at Eartham, and paint some of them in my painting room there.

If you and Cowper would join in a work with prints, from designs of Flaxman, and your humble servant.—But more of this when I have the pleasure of seeing you. As I hope to see you very soon, I shall stop short and only tell you how much I am devoted to you.

Pine Apple Place, December 12, 1793.

My dear friend,

I thank you for your kind letter, and your great kindness when in town. You have given me fresh spirits, and raised me from apprehensions. But I have been low some days past, which prevented my writing. I had not power; perhaps it is the weather that affects me. Yet I have not been negligent in my ideas of pictures. I have been arranging some of the subjects in the Seven Ages, and think I shall be able to make some of them out soon. Then I mean to send them to you for your approbation. I think of making my pictures the size of my Indian woman, and the number of the set twelve. What do you think of my plan?

The favorite project of my friend, at this period, was to delineate, in a series of pictures, the whole life of man, and not to confine himself to Shakespeare's celebrated description of the different ages. Romney was willing to take a leading idea from one of our great poets, but he had an excursive vigour and richness of fancy, that made him delight in adding images

of his own creation to those, that were furnished by the author, from whom he caught the ground work of his intended composition. For example, in a picture that he began of the first age, he did not represent *the Infant*

" *Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.*"

But on the bosom of its reclining mother, whose couch is surrounded by several attendants, and among them her husband, a young man of florid health in the habiliments of a hunter, who seems eager to give a kiss of benediction to his wife and child before he sets forth for the chace. This picture like all its intended companions was never completed, though several parts of it, had exquisite expression, and beauty.

In the commencement of the year 1794, Romney appears to have exercised his pencil in the higher province of art, with a diligent and chearful spirit.

For in his first letter of the year just mentioned, January 10, he said:

My Ophelia is nearly finished, and the Seven Ages are going on well. I mean to paint the first directly—but silence!

His second letter, of the same month, touches on a recent loss that afflicted us both, the death of that great historian whom Romney had painted for me, with the faithful and perfect expression of his social and friendly character. "Poor Gibbon!" exclaims the friendly artist, in a letter of January 29.

His last words were, MON DIEU, BON DIEU. *They have affected me so much, I shall turn my thoughts more to Christianity than I have done. The approach of death convinced him, that there is something more than he had formerly believed.*

I could wish to persuade myself, that the infidelity of Gibbon was nothing more than what he himself called it, in a letter to me, *only supposed infidelity;* but of Romney I can say, with the most satisfactory conviction, that he had a most sincere and cordial reverence for the Gospel. I used often to tell him, that I expected to see his old age as devout as that of

his favorite Michael Angelo, and it was in truth his intention to devote his pencil, and his mind, in the full maturity of their powers, to subjects derived from that religion, which not only surpasses every other, as a rule of life, but affords also the richest and purest fund of pathetic and sublime imagery to exercise, and ennoble, all the finest of the arts. His devotional feelings were naturally so strong, that if he had employed his talents entirely on sacred subjects, he would have greatly resembled that amiable and devout painter of Italy, Fra Giovanni Angelico, who never resumed his pencil without a prayer, and had his eyes filled with tears in representing the sufferings of our Saviour.

The tenderness and the sublimity of Milton were equally the objects of Romney's admiration, and if his own powers had been fairly and fully exerted, they would have rendered equal justice to each characteristic of that divine poet, to whom he devoted, at this time, many of his private hours, as he says himself in the following letter.

Pine Apple Place, Feb. 15, 1794.

My dear friend,

I like yonr new plan, but it would be a work of many years, and much depends on my health and spirits. I had formed a plan of painting the Seven Ages, and also the Visions of Adam with the Angel, to bring in the flood, and the opening of the ark, which would make six large pictures, (but this is a profound secret.) Indeed to tell you the truth, I have made designs for all the pictures, and very grand subjects they are. I beg no human creature may have a hint of it. My plan was, if I should live and retain my senses and sight, to paint six other subjects from Milton: three where Satan is the hero, and three of Adam and Eve. Perhaps six of each. I have ideas of them all, and I may say sketches; but alas! I cannot begin any thing for one year or two, and if my name was mentioned, I should hear nothing but abuse, and that I cannot bear.

Fear has been always my enemy. My nerves are too weak for supporting any thing in public.

I beg you will soon answer this, and be assured of my truth and affection.

Romney was perfectly conscious of that excessive awe, which he felt of the world, and sometimes he would jest, with great humour, on his own extravagant timidity. His imagination was indeed singularly used to start and tremble at phantoms of its own creation; but in a field of battle I am persuaded he would have shewn not only manly valour, but even

a spirit of adventurous heroism. One of his endearing qualities was an eagerness to encourage and befriend the early dawning of genius in any young mind. Many proofs of this will appear in his letters of a later date, and it is tenderly displayed in the following extract from one of this period.

March 29, 1794.

I thank you for giving me the agreeable account of dear Tom and his growing passion for the noble art of design, which will encrease in proportion as he advances. I have seen him grow up, and he has grown into my mind as a relative. Poor Cowper!

The compassion of Romney and my own were most painfully excited, at this period, by the recent sufferings of our beloved poet at Weston.

I hastened to him in April, in a fruitless endeavour to chear his dejected spirit. The weeks, that I passed under his roof in those unsuccessful efforts, and the hour in which I left him, were painful beyond expression; and in my return through London, I had the additional affliction of finding Romney very far from well. But for him, (I thank Heaven) a few more

years of chearful activity were yet in store, and the following letter describes his recovery.

May 27, 1794.

My DEAR FRIEND,

I think I remember observing once before to you, that of all the qualities belonging to man, that of tender compassion, in pouring consolation into the sick or wounded mind, approaches nearest to the divinity. When you first called on me, I was in a very weak state both of body and mind; or the first stage of recovery: but before you left London, you might observe how much my health improved, though I had not resolution to take your kind advice, and follow you to Eartham. I have still profited by your kindness; the consolation, it gave my spirits, has advanced my health, which I shall always remember with gratitude.

I suppose there are five degrees or stages of recovery in a sick man, before he reaches robust health. I think I am now in the beginning of the fourth, and when I shall arrive at four and a half (which is as high as my feeble health will admit, and which is robust health in me), I shall begin to look about me, and jostle in the world again. Yes! and bend my bow at those, that kick and and tread upon me. It is a hard fate that a painter is obliged to live in a state of warfare, and jostling. I never more earnestly wished myself out of the bustle of business than at present. O for tranquillity and peace!

I am delighted from your account to find dear Tom discovers a growing passion for the noble art of sculpture. I hope and wish, I was going to say, to SEE HIM *as great as Phidias and Palladio, when I am looking down from the stars. Some day I hope I shall see him in his full splendour.*

The interest which the great artist took in the talents of the youth, of whom he spoke so fervently, was friendly in the highest degree. Several proofs will appear, as this narrative proceeds, of their reciprocal regard, which did honor to them both.

The playful infancy of my son had endeared him to Romney, for whom he used to prepare little articles in his painting apparatus, with the sprightly quickness of that smiling fairy, in whose character he was painted. When I reflect on the innumerable sweet and socially studious hours, that I have enjoyed with these two fellow students, and with Cowper, I seem astonished that having lost all the trio, so inexpressibly dear to me, I can yet retain in my own mind any particles of chearful activity; but the tender delight I have taken in commemorating, with zealous fidelity, the meritorious and endearing qualities of my lost associates, has preserved me, under Heaven, from that deep and calamitous depression, which reduces a mind naturally active to absolute and wretched inactivity. Still happy, in some degree, if

the warmth, and permanence, of my attachment to each of these very dear departed friends, may yet enable me to render to them all such an honorable tribute of truth, and affection, as all most assuredly have deserved from me, and such as they all perhaps, had they foreseen, that I was destined to survive them, would have wished me to pay to their memories,

Let me now return to Romney, in the summer of 1794. A kind letter in July informed me, that he was preparing to visit the Isle of Wight with his son, and a young friend of his; that the little party hoped to call at Eartham in their way, and that he intended, after their excursion, to return to me by himself. His letter contained a friendly suggestion of a tour to Holland. He invited me and my son to embark with him and Mr. John Romney, because he wished to purchase pictures in that country, and because he thought the state of my health required such a relaxation from sedentary studies.

The projected excursion to the Isle of Wight

was soon accomplished; but his own precarious health, and that of his friend also, at this time much impaired, induced him to give up the idea of visiting Holland. The following letter shews, in a lively manner, the passion of the painter for romantic scenery.

Cowes, Isle of Wight, July 17, 1794.

My dear friend,

Though I cannot say much for my health since I arrived here, I can say how much your kindness has charmed my two fellow travellers.

We arrived here on Saturday evening; on Sunday we crossed the island to Steep Hill, the villa of Tollemache. The sudden appearance of the sea, and rocky scenery struck me more forcibly than any thing of the kind, I had ever seen before. It was a bird's eye view of the sea, with ships of war sailing below us. The blue sea (for that was the colour) broad and extensive, and marbled beautifully by several streams of wind. We descended about half a mile (which was very steep) to a little village amongst rocks, cascades, and large trees, where this villa is most ROMANTICALLY *placed. If I were to dwell on the beauties, and the grandeur of the assemblage of objects, it would detain me an hour. In short, it is the thing that hit my taste. What must such a scene be in winter, and in a tempest? Good God! I think I see the waves rolling, and a ship striking upon the rocks, &c. &c.*

I have not yet bathed: my stay will, I believe, be about a fortnight longer, and then I think of returning by Eartham to stop with you, but I shall soon be wanted in London—more of that hereafter.

My friend dispatched two more letters to Eartham before he quitted the Isle of Wight. They relate chiefly to his impaired health, but some expressions in one of them display so forcibly his intense love of art, and his zeal for its prosperity, that the passage I allude to seems justly to claim a place in this volume.

July 28.

I have a plan in contemplation of a little academy next winter in the room under my gallery. I think Flaxman will approve of it. The advantage will be much greater, when each can set his figures, as suits him, and with the quiet of only three persons. Do you approve of this?

It is the more incumbent on me to notice this idea, as I believe it originated in a most friendly solicitude for the success of my son, who in a visit to Derbyshire had been so much encouraged to draw by Wright the artist, whom he frequently attended as a kind instructor, that he conceived a passion for art, which our intimacy with Romney had a continual tendency to raise and encrease. As we had all a most chearful confidence in the genius and

in the friendship of Flaxman, now returning from Rome, it was a general wish, that the promising youth, whose early love of the pencil had been occasionally fostered by two friendly painters, should become a regular disciple of a benevolent and admirable sculptor.

The delight that Romney took in his early talents, and in the highly-promising commencement of his studies, under a master so esteemed, and beloved, will appear in the sequel. I have now to notice the return of the painter from the Isle of Wight to Eartham. His excursion had not improved his health to the extent of our hopes, and wishes, and he was prevented from resting more than a few days in rural quiet by a pressure of business, that hurried him to London. His first letter, after his return to town, is dated on the 8th of August; it was soon followed by a second, that I hasten to insert, because though it speaks not of his professional occupation, it

will I think endear him to my reader, by throwing a lustre on his character as a friend.

August 20, 1794.

My dear friend,

I am quite overcome with the melancholy reflections in your kind letter, and your still greater kindness in wishing to be serviceable to me while in this troubled state. I hope this impression on your spirits is only transitory, and that autumnal air and bathing will restore your health. Indeed if you should go before me, I should lose every thing that is dear to me, and the best friend I ever had. I hope you will trust me. I have gratitude in my heart, and true kindness to render every service I can to your dear boy for my life time, whatever may happen to you. My dear bard chear up! and finish the poem you have so happily begun! The arrival of Flaxman will give a spring to your mind. I have heard good tidings of him. His father received a letter from him last Friday, and expects him in England in about three weeks. I have been poorly since I got home, but am better in the last two days.

September 13.

I am happy to hear from your kind letter, that you are better, and that you have been amused. I wish I could say I am better, or that my mind is agreeably amused. To divert my mind a little I have begun the first stage of man, and the prison scene; also a great cartoon. I am now without a friend here that I dare speak to. They ask me why I do not finish my pictures? &c. &c. I wish to God you could contrive to come and stay all the winter. Forgive me!

LONDON, *September* 26, 1794.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your kind invitation has raised my drooping spirits, but I have much to do before I can stir from this place. You are the man of all others, who know how to administer consolation in the tenderest and most encouraging manner. Doctor Ainsley happened to call when I was in my disturbed state, and sent for my son to come up from Cambridge. He came directly and his readiness gave me pleasure; but he was obliged to return to do church duty. I have suffered much, and the impression still hangs upon me. I am quite opprest. Bear with me, I am afraid I talk too much of myself. I was delighted with dear Tom's exquisite feeling when you were buffeting the waves. Flaxman is gone round by Venice: though he is not here in person, I have caught a portion of his soul from the beautiful images of his Homer and Dante. I am charmed with them, they have thrown a light upon my mind, that has dissipated some of its thick gloom. Flaxman's taste leans much to the old cathedral, simple, and pure. I long to see him return, and if he arrives soon I think of accompanying him to your lovely abode.

LONDON, *Oct.* 10, 1794.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am happy to find you accomplish your wishes in riding and bathing. I feel myself so much recovered that I am hard at work again; and not certain at present, if I shall be able to stir. If the weather should clear up, I still think of visiting you, as I wish much to see you, though my plans at present are going on well in my art. No account of Flaxman yet! do tell me if you are near well, and if you are advancing in any of your great works.

The year 1794 was unfavorable to the health of Romney, and to that of his Sussex friend—Our spirits had been saddened in the early part of it, first by the death of Gibbon, an event universally lamented from the social and friendly qualities of the man, not to mention the great talents of the historian; an event peculiarly affecting to me, from the circumstance of my having been engaged by Gibbon, in the kindest manner, not indeed to travel with him in his return to Lausanne, but to follow him so rapidly, as to allow him only a few days to prepare his hospitable mansion to receive his expected guests, myself and my son. We had both promised him to be punctual to this very kind appointment on meeting him in Northamptonshire in the Autumn of 1793, and this intended visit, of friendly delight, was settled for the beginning of May, in the following Spring; a Spring which the benevolent projector of a plan so pleasant was destined alas! never to behold. Had not his unexpected death annihilated this chearful vision, it is highly probable, that my solicitude for Romney's declining health, and Gibbon's just esteem

for his character, would have conspired to make the beloved artist one of our party. Instead of enjoying in the beautiful scenery of Lausanne the hospitable historian's instructive and enlivening conversation, it was our lot to lament, at this time, in our own country his early death, and the calamitous fate of our beloved Cowper, who sunk this year into that overwhelming dejection of spirit, from which he never perfectly revived. There was however at this period a ray of light, that seemed to promise his speedy recovery. On my dispatching these glad tidings to Romney, he sent me the following very tender reply, in which he speaks of mental decay in terms so pathetic, that we might almost fancy them inspired by a presage of his being destined to suffer in his own person, that most deplorable of mortal evils, before his final release from the sufferings ofmortality.

Pine Apple Place, October 18, 1794.

My dear friend,

I rejoice with all my heart at the tidings you have conveyed to me. If there is a blessing in nature above all others, it is, when a man recovers his lost reason. And if there is a situation more deplo

rable than any other in nature, it is the horrible decline of reason, and the de rangement of that power, we have been blest with. How hard it is for a man with a feeling mind to preserve that balance in his understanding, that carries hiw well through life! Bless all those who dedicate their time to the weakness of the human mind! I rejoice at your happy recovery. I am not settled yet; but still think of visiting you, either with Flaxman or without. He is expected in a few days.

The very tender state of Romney's health and spirits induced him to hasten into Sussex without waiting for the friend so eagerly expected, after a studious excursion of several years. When the painter arrived at Eartham, our first object was to amuse, and fortify his mind against the encroachment of that insidious malady the hypochondria, which has so frequent and cruel a tendency to impede the exertions of active genius. For this purpose I and my son attended him into Hampshire. We amused ourselves in a survey of Portsmouth, and enjoyed on our road home, a few chearful hours with the late Doctor Warton, at Wickham. That goodnatured, and lively, critic contributed not a little to invigorate the tender spirits of Romney by the fervent praise he bestowed on his cartoons, in black chalk, from scenes

of Greek tragedy; subjects peculiarly interesting to this ardent lover of antient literature, who, if I remember right, particularly commended a design of Romney, that he had lately seen in London, describing the dream of Atossa from the Persæ of Æschylus; a favorite drama of Warton, and of every scholar, who takes a lively interest in the glory of Greece. The cartoon was so powerful in its spirit and expression, that it seemed worthy to have been applauded by Æschylus himself.

From Sussex the artist was hastily recalled to town by the pressure of business. The following letter displays the exultation of his heart on a prospect of Flaxman's arrival from Italy.

November 4, 1794.

My dear friend,

Huzza! Huzza! tidings from Flaxman, my dear friend. He was at Verona. and says he will be in London on the Lord Mayor's Day. Your joy cannot be greater than mine. Our casts also are arrived safe from Verona at the custom-house.

Thanks to your kindness I have received a kind note from Doctor War-

ton. I expect my academy to be ready soon, and I hope to be able to practice all the winter in company with our dear Tom, and another promising young artist. Rose dined with me yesterday, and you were often in our memory.

November 17, 1794.

My dear friend,

I suppose you have had by this time an inspiring affectionate letter from our dear returned sculptor. I am still more charmed with him than ever; his company is delightful. Indeed I am quite made happy by his return. I think he will go and see you, though he is very anxious to get settled in a house. You flatter me very much by your kind letter in remembering me with such affection, whenever you have an opportunity to do me service.

December 19, 1794.

My dear friend,

I expect with great impatience to see you soon, and shall delay saying any thing, till that time arrives, though many things very interesting to me have happened. However I must tell you, that I am now in better health and spirits, than I have been for some time past.

I received a very pleasing letter from my dear inspiring and improving little artist; and rejoice with all my heart and soul, at his growing passion, which I do not doubt will lead him to every thing honorable to himself and his art. Remember my best affections to him, and encourage him from me to pursue with all his vigour, the noble art, that his mind seems truly turned for. My blessing will ever attend him.

Do tell me my dear friend and consoler, how your health and spirits are, and when I may expect the pleasure of seeing you in town. Flaxman is returned from the Country, and has been very kind in getting my casts from the

Custom house. I believe I may now say I have the best private collection in London. He has fixed on a house, and near me, which is delightful to my feelings. He is a most accomplished artist.

I trust I shall not painfully affect the feelings of a living friend by the publication of praise bestowed on him so cordially by the departed. It is an act of justice, that I owe to the heart of Romney, to shew with what affectionate and generous delight he contemplated rising merit, instead of viewing it with that supercilious austerity, or envious apprehension, with which old and successful candidates for public favor are sometimes inclined to retard the success of their younger followers in a similar career. Romney had in truth a paternal mind, (to use an expression of Horace, *notus in fratres animi paterni)* towards his brothers in art, as well as towards the brothers, that nature had given him. Concerning his care and patronage of the latter, I shall have a future opportunity to speak from the grateful testimony of his only surviving brother, the Colonel, who has kindly promised to visit my retreat if his injured health will

allow him to do so, with fresh documents concerning the fraternal tenderness and liberality of our deceased friend, before this volume can be completed at the press. Let me now return to the painter in 1794; the afflictions, that we both endured in the early part of that memorable year, were happily counterbalanced in the close of it, by the joyous interest, that we both took in the advantages and honor, that our friend Flaxman had acquired in his studious travels of seven years, and in his prosperous return.

The year 1795 opened with an event, that had a very chearful influence on the kind and tender spirit of Romney. This was the highly promising establishment of his young friend, Thomas Hayley, as the domestic disciple of Flaxman. The tender attention bestowed by the two great artists on the early talents of this diligent youth, I can never sufficiently acknowledge. The delight that Romney took in cherishing and commending them, will appear in his subsequent letters.

At present I must borrow intelligence concerning the occupation of the painter (and I have a mournful gratification in doing so) from the papers of that dear departed youth, whom he encouraged so kindly in the chearful commencement of his brief career.

It has happened by I know not what mischance, that Romney's letters to me during the first half of the year 1795, have been lost or mislaid. But the letters of my son enable me to ascertain, in that period, the beginning of a picture by our friend, in which I took a peculiar interest, entertaining a sanguine hope, that his admirers might in time regard it as a most interesting example of his inventive powers.—Alas! it was never advanced even half way to its completion, but the first unfinished idea of it upon a very extensive canvas is still worthy of notice, and the head of our Saviour appears so finely conceived, that I trust an engraving from it will be deemed a proper decoration of this volume, I will now mention the rise of his design. In the year 1794,

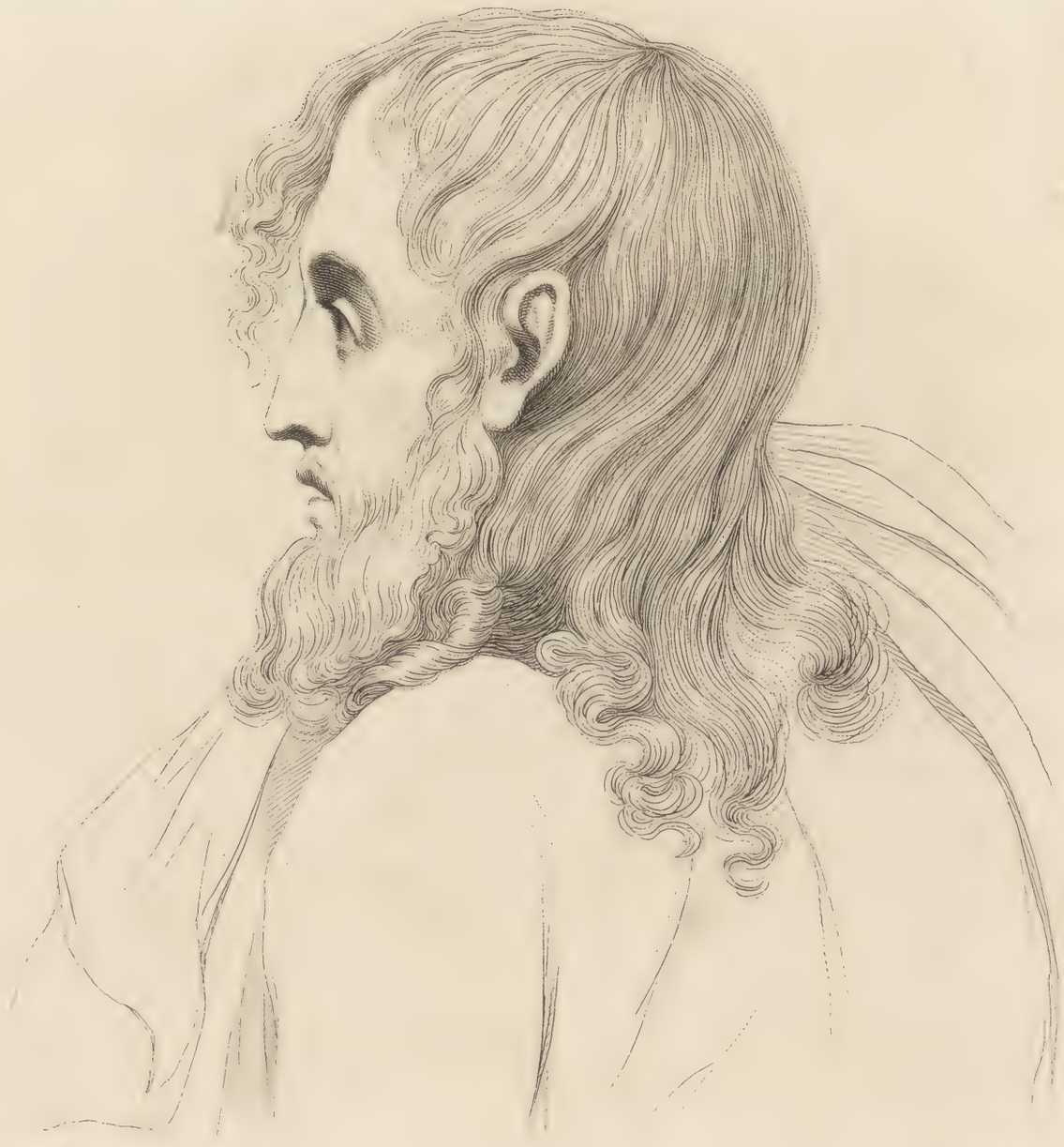
a passage in the Paradise Regained of Milton, so forcibly struck me as full of sentiment and picture, that I desired my son to transcribe it for Romney. It was the sublime description of our Saviour in the wilderness.

Infernal ghosts, and hellish furies, round
Environ'd thee; some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Satst unappall'd in calm and sinless peace.

My son sent his transcript of the passage to our beloved painter, and probably when he became his neighbour, and frequent visiter in London, reminded him of a subject for his pencil, that we thought so peculiarly worthy of his genius. However this may be, the following extract from a letter of the young sculptor, will serve to shew at what time this great sketch was begun.

March 29, 1795.

Now for myself!—I go on charmingly. The Flaxmans I like more and more. He is such a man, he cannot be praised too much. Mrs. Flaxman is



Rembrandt Pinx.

A. Bramhach Aq. Fecit

Head of an Old Man

from a large unfinished Picture

Published June 1st 1793 by Thomas Hearne Hall Mall

very good to me: so is the immortal painter. He desires I will chuse any of his casts to model from that I please: he intends to take lodgings at Hampstead to recruit his strength. He has begun his head of our Saviour in the wilderness. It is very much the thing I think. I am quite in his confidence.

The happy juvenile spirit displayed in these few lines from the new student of sculpture, then in his fifteenth year, may interest such gentle readers as look with indulgence on the gaiety of industrious youth.

The little boast of the lively boy as enjoying the confidence of the great artist, was not destitute of foundation, for Romney thought so highly of his pure and intelligent mind, that he frequently consulted him, and particularly on occasions relating to art. This young counsellor who thought glory infinitely preferable to gold, exhorted Romney continually to relieve himself from the drudgery, of which he was very apt to complain, by bidding adieu to portraits, and devoting all his time to historical composition; advice the more seasonable, as the painter seemed in this year to have been almost overwhelmed by the multitude of his sitters.

The first of his letters bearing the date of 1795, expresses in a very affectionate manner the extreme tenderness of his own health, and the friendly interest he took in the early studies of my son.

London, June 17, 1795.

My dear friend,

Your kind letter came very opportunely. It was quite a balm to my mind; indeed I may truly say, you have ever administered comfort to my distressed spirits; and as I know your readiness in writing, I thought you rather delayed saying any thing to me, which raised an anxiety in my mind: (I say it with tears in my eyes) that should I be unfortunate enough to lose your good opinion, my melancholy would have no end.

I am going to decline business, to wind up my bottom and then build me a house, which I hope will inspire me with new vigour, and I pray God, I may recover my spirits to go on anew. I have still the same passion for art, and begin to feel at times a regeneration in my mind, that approaches to something more refined. Our dear little sculptor has made an excellent copy. He surprises me more and more. I do not know I ever saw such rapid progress before in any art. You know I am always anxious to hear from you.

July 10, 1795.

My dear friend,

Your letter was of more value to me than you are aware of. The kindness expressed in it left an impression that dwelt on my mind, and saved me from falling into some melancholy malady. I have been very much under the impression of that dreadful feeling for many months past. I believe it is partly constitutional, but I hope my spirits will clear up

when I am once settled. The time is now approaching. It will be near August before I can disentangle myself from my portrait business. Whether I can take the advantage of your kind invitation I am not certain. I should wish much to accompany the two sculptors, (Flaxman and his pupil). I find I am getting better very fast, so God bless you and all your undertakings.

July 30, 1795.

My dear friend,

I have not much to say at present, farther than to thank you for your readiness and repeated kindness in answering my letters, when I am distressed myself or for some friend. In the latter case I think there is something more sacred, and that interests more deeply, than for one's self. Our friend may not at all times be able to act, or think for himself. Friendship is then the first of human blessings. Only whilst I can merit friendship, do I wish to live, If it fades away in all I hope to die.

I am still unsettled where and when I shall fix my first stone, and make my gravel walks, and plant my cedars; but to build my house and plant my cedars, I am determined. God light up the imaginations of lawyers!

I am concerned I do not hear what you are doing. I am sure no man is more heartily interested, whatever it is. Believe me most sincerely yours, and all alive to every thing that you do, whilst I am G. Romney.

September 3, 1795.

My dear friend,

I am flattered with the notice Flaxman has taken of my family picture, (the Bosanquet family). I think it has unity, and sentiment. I certainly should be happy to execute the picture you mention of Lord Egremont's family. Perhaps it would be my last. But farther

I cannot say yet. I am glad to hear the young Phidias is returning. I have higher hopes of him, than I ever had of any young man of his age, in talents, vigorous industry, and serenity of temper. His being so happily settled with a man of profound knowledge of his art, and I may say every other science, with religion and good temper will lead the young sculptor to every excellence: I hope I may be considered as an auxiliary in every way good will can be turned. I have many more things to say, but the heat of the weather is so great, I have not the power of writing farther.

Sept. 8, 1795.

I certainly shall hasten to you in a few days with my pleasing companion Carwardine, I shall also send canvas and colours to begin the picture, about which you have so much interested yourself for me. Since you have spoken so decidedly, I long to run down and enjoy your conversation, and country quiet; and sympathise in all your feelings.

I have before observed, that it had long been an object of Romney's ambition, to place some work of his pencil in the princely mansion of Petworth. Lord Egremont had the kindness not only to employ him on a large family picture, but to indulge him in his wish of executing the work in his favorite painting room at Eartham; for this purpose Romney visited Sussex in September, and kindly obtained permission from Flaxman to let his pupil attend him, although the young sculptor had recently returned to his studies

in the house of his master. That excellent master knew it was never the wish of the painter to lead ingenious youth into idleness, but rather to promote by exhortation and example the utmost activity of laudable ambition.

The travellers enjoyed their social excursion: the great picture was chearfully begun, and the young sculptor in the course of his holidays contrived to execute a medallion of the painter, which gave rise to the following Sonnet, and will appear among the engravings, that decorate this volume.

SONNET,

Dear Boy! in spirit like the dawning day!
And more in temper, than in age mature!
Let me applaud, with benediction pure,
Thy arduous purpose, of Promethean clay,
To form the friend, who in thy infant play,
Perceived, and wished with kindness to secure,

(What now may heaven with happiest aid ensure)
Thy bloom of early talents, rich, and gay.
In thy young work, the soul of Romney lives,
And gratitude for once performs the part
Of skill and practice.—Yet retain by heart
The lesson Flaxman's bright example gives!
That e'en by genius excellence is bought
With length of labour, and a life of thought.

As I find that Romney's letters to me display the tender singularities of his nature, much better than I could describe them, I continue to insert such extracts from them, as may render my readers intimately, and I trust agreeably, acquainted with the man. The following is the first account of his return to London.

October 6, 1795.

My dear friend,

Thank God I am recovered from the dreadful impression of returning to my old trammels, and of leaving those, whom I love dearly. The great kindness I met with, the beauty of the scenery, and the fineness of the season, had so much unhinged me, it was difficult to regain my old habits of industry. I lay awake all the next morning to muse, and feed on what had passed, for several hours. When I look around me, I am obliged to suffer those things, that delighted me so much to fade away, and remove

into the back ground of time, and every now and then to regret with a tear, what perhaps may never return. I long to hear of Eartham, and Petworth, of my elves and fairies. I have seen the Flaxmans and they are very kind. Dear Tom seems settled and happy. I have been not well, which prevented my writing so soon as I ought.

October 16, 1795.

Your very kind letter, my dearest of friends, was a cordial to my mind, and especially all the information you have given me of Petworth. But as I hope to see you soon I shall only tell you I am much better. My head by dear Tom comes out very well, and every one thinks it extremely like.

The painter closed the year 1795, by a second visit to Sussex, to advance the large picture he had begun. His health and spirits were in so tender a state, that I was apprehensive a little mischance might frustrate his intention. For the indisposition of a child rendered it impossible for the little party to attend him in his favorite painting room, but by crossing the hills to Petworth every morning, and returning to Eartham every night, he improved his health and forwarded his business beyond his expectation. At Petworth he found every encouragement, every indulgence; and often did he speak with the most lively gratitude of the infinite kindness he experienced in that mansion.

The kind artist began the year 1796, by a very endearing act of friendship in dispatching to me the following account of the young sculptor, whose juvenile performances he continually regarded with indulgent partiality, and generous encouragement.

January 19, 1796.

My dear friend,

Though I have many things to say in answer to your last letter, I must for the present wave saying any thing in answer; and turn my mind to give some account of the extraordinary talents Tom has discovered in a design he has made from the New Testament, of the two Angels and Mary at the tomb of Christ. I speak with a degree of amazement. It is simple, grand, and beautiful, better conceived and with more good sense, than any design of the same subject I have ever seen. I give you joy of this first and bright example of his invention. I could not delay communicating what must give you so much joy. Tom informs me you are at work. Huzza!

As it is my great ambition to display in this memorial the peculiar benignity and spirit of Romney's character as a friend, I trust the considerate reader will pardon all the egotism, which I have vainly wished to exclude from the volume, because I found it impossible to do justice to all the affectionate feelings of my companion and correspondent, without introducing much of myself, and much of my son, whose

talents as a very young artist, Romney was ever inclined to encourage and commend. If he lavished excessive praise on his juvenile productions, it flowed from the genuine warmth and kindness of his own feelings, for being familiar with the infancy of a sprightly and engaging child, he had been gradually led to regard him with great partiality.

The busy painter seems at this period to have almost forgotten his resolution to disentangle himself from the troublesome part of his profession, if we may judge from the tenor of his next letter, in which (after the history of a little vexation, he had endured by not obtaining a piece of ground at Kilburn, on which he had a fancy to build) he says:

February 20, 1796.

My gallery has been much frequented. Among its visiters I have had Charles Fox, &c. The Prince has been with me again and promised to sit.

I have had an earlier opportunity of observing, that Romney never exercised his pencil with so much pleasure, as when he employed it in a disin-

terested manner, to indulge the feelings of friendship. He spontaneously began in the country two pictures, each containing several figures for this purpose. The first contained his friend of Eartham, seated at a table with Tully's Essay on Friendship before him. Two young friends, Thomas Hayley and William Meyer (the only remaining son of the celebrated artist) are represented as standing by the side of the reader; the former has a little statue of Minerva in his hand, to denote his profession as a sculptor, and his associate, wears the Gown of Trinity College, in Cambridge, of which he was a student, when the picture was painted. A head of the painter is also introduced, but in too hasty a manner to be a faithful portrait. The larger performance, to which I have alluded, was designed to express the friendly interest, which the painter took in the promising establishment of his young favorite, as the disciple of Flaxman. It represents the three artists, and their old friend, all at full length. Romney, when he began this kindly-intended picture (which he never completed, for he meant to repaint two of the heads) expressly declared

his purpose, that the picture should be stationed with me till my decease, that it should then descend to Flaxman, and from him to his disciple; a remarkable and endearing proof of the minute and cordial attention which the painter often delighted in shewing to the wishes and feelings of those, whom he was anxious to gratify.

In the Spring of 1796, Romney had a short, but very serious illness, which he described in the following letter, with singular energy of expression.

March 15, 1796.

My dear friend,

Your kind letter was a cordial to my feelings. You know what nerves are, after severe illness; but I hope to re-establish my health without indulging in your invitation.

I feel like one escaped from an enchantment, where some fiend presided. The tyranny of the disease was terrible for four days; my throat burst and the enchantment vanished. Carwardine was, and still is in town, which was fortunate for me; his cordiality made time pass more comfortably to my spirits; I now feel recovered and can work, I cannot say how much I admire dear Tom's progress. I shall never forget your kindness while I am

G. R.

Though the painter was soon restored to the use of his pencil, and executed much professional business in the course of this year, a subsequent letter shews, in a very affecting manner, how much he suffered from that insidious distemper, Melancholy.

Spring, 1796.

My dear friend,

My spirits have been so very indifferent, I have not been able to write; and now I can only say a word or two, and that is, I long to hear from you. Perhaps when the days grow longer, and I can sleep at Hampstead, I may get better, but alas! my prospect of future life, grows dreary. I can say no more at present, but I hope your spirits are good and you may defy every other calamity. My affections hover round you, God bless you.

The friends of Romney did not think his sufferings the less entitled to their attention and pity, because they knew them to be merely imaginary: on the contrary several of his associates were ever eager to employ both reason and raillery, in freeing him from those oppressive phantoms, which his powerful imagination under these transient clouds was so apt to produce. An amiable poet says happily on this barbarous distemper, the Spleen.

" *Throw but a stone the giant dies.*"

I once had the pleasure of seeing Romney so speedily delivered from the tyranny of this giant, that I will relate the anecdote trifling as it may appear, in the hope, it may suggest useful hints for the relief of others, who may suffer a similar oppression. In July 1796, I happened to pass a few days at Kew, with my young friend William Meyer, and my son, who came to meet me in a house long endeared to us by the kindness of its inhabitants. I had proposed to amuse my young companions by a sight of the pictures in Windsor Castle, but as the weather precluded us from that projected excursion, Meyer kindly offered to introduce us to the sight of some fine pictures much nearer, the collection of his neighbour the late Mr. Udney at Teddington. A lady of very elegant manners received us so graciously, that we all rejoiced in our exchange of Windsor for Teddington. On seeing two very interesting pictures of Salvator Rosa, and Corregio, I could not help exclaiming that I

thought a sight of them would be a medicine to my friend Romney, who was then suffering under nervous depression. We were most kindly invited to make the experiment. The next morning Meyer and I surprized the sick painter in his chamber at Hampstead, before he had quitted his pillow. We proposed to him the specific, we had discovered for his depression. No! he replied, he was too ill to move. He was in a state of health, that would not allow him to receive entertainment even from fine pictures. By gentle degrees, we reanimated him so far, as to prevail on him to attend us in our return to Kew, where we assured him he would find only friends, that were used to chear him. The ladies of Kew, and a little coffee inspirited him so much, that he ventured to Teddington. Here, as we had predicted, Salvator Rosa, and Correggio, proved such powerful magicians, that they completely banished all his complaints. We returned to Kew, and our revived friend most agreeably rewarded us, for the cure, we had so speedily wrought, by acknowledging, that although he felt more than half dead, when we entered his chamber, in the morn-

ing, he had never passed a more delightful day in his life. So easy is it for seasonable kindness to triumph over the formidable legion of blue-devils.

The following letter happens to have no date, but its allusion to the incidents I have just related, and my friend's preparation for his next visit to Sussex, clearly prove that it was written early in August, 1796.

My dearest of friends,

The last time I had the pleasure of seeing you was a day indeed; a day I shall never forget: it was so very friendly and gallant to me. It was the first step to my recovery; the journey to Cambridge afterwards with our friend Carwardine, contributed to what you begun. The shaking of the coach, the scenery, the variety of company and kindness from all contributed to bring me to a working mood. I have now finished the Petworth picture, so that it may be removed, and I have also painted a lovely daughter of Lady Townshend. I have not been able to form to myself any time, when I shall take my departure to the south, and visit the friendly and lovely scenes of Eartham, till now, that my health is much recovered: I have been able to work hard for the last fortnight, and shall be still at work, till Mr. Bunce the Architect, has agreed with me on my proposed building. Then I hope it will not be longer than a day or two before I shall see you. I must not forget dear Tom's fine head of the Goddess of Wisdom (a small mar-

ble bust of Minerva.) He has infused more of that attribute into the countenance, than I have commonly seen. There is a tender softness about the mouth, that is very affecting to me.

I have got the Birth and Triumph of Love, a poem with prints, and shall bring it with me, and hope to be with you in a few days.

The mention that Romney made of his journey to Cambridge, in the letter just imparted to the reader, induced me to make enquiry concerning the particulars of his visit to that university, whose name can never occur to me without many pleasing recollections of juvenile friendship and of social study.

My enquiry produced a very kind and interesting letter from his fellow traveller in that excursion, some of whose excellent remarks on the works and merits of our favorite painter, may find perhaps a more suitable place in this volume. Here therefore I will only transcribe what my obliging correspondent has said on the subject immediately in question. " Our journey to Cambridge was undertaken, more for the change of air, and the recovery of our friend, after a severe fit of illness, than from any hope of seeing good pic-

tures, since our universities are rather repositories for literature, than for painting. However I recollect, that when we dined with Doctor Craven, master of Saint John's, we found in his rooms, a portrait of Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and almoner to the Lady Margaret Countess of Richmond, and mother of King Henry the Seventh. She, you know, was the foundress of the college, and engaged the bishop to superintend the progress of the building. The portrait was painted by Holbein, and to give you the opinion of Romney, it is one of the very finest portraits ever painted by Holbein, or indeed by any painter. It is impossible to look at it long without forgetting that it is a picture, and viewing it as a living and venerable old man in the attitude of speaking to you. It is a half-length, and the painter's initials are visible on a cornelian, which decorates the finger of the good old Bishop. You have now all I can recollect of our Cambridge excursion." This excursion was probably planned by the benevolence of the dejected painter's fellow traveller, and assuredly nothing could be better suited to reanimate such an invalide, than

the tenderness and vivacity of this intelligent associate, who had been for many years, his constant admirer, and his confidential companion.

The fortunate restoration of his spirits at this season, enabled Romney to exercise his art through the whole summer with peculiar comfort and pleasure. He arrived at Eartham, with the family of Meyer, on the eleventh of August, and very soon began to employ himself on the picture already mentioned, which was a favorite of his affectionate fancy, and called by himself *the four friends.* As William Meyer was now of our party, the kind artist was eager to seize the opportunity of finishing his head in the group. I never knew the spirits of Romney so uniformly chearful, as they were while his attention was engaged on this performance; but several circumstances conspired to give peculiar animation to his health in this autumn. He had completed his Petworth picture to his own satisfaction, and though an indifferent horseman, he was at last pursuaded by his friends, to add frequent exercise on horseback to the salutary

discipline of sea bathing. These were all incidents propitious to his delicate health. Another circumstance contributed not a little to inspirit him at this season; the prospect of finding ample amusement in his projected building. He had recently purchased an old house in Hampstead, with a spacious stable on elevated ground behind it; and there he intended to form a villa, with every accommodation for the exercise of his art. It chanced that his Sussex friend had also at this time, a project of building at Felpham, and Flaxman had particularly recommended a very pleasing acquaintance of his as an architect. Romney was so eager to consult this intelligent artist, that instead of waiting for him in Sussex, where he was expected, he requested that we might hasten to London together, which would afford him a double satisfaction, that of consulting with the architect, and shewing me the premises he was so anxious to improve. On the 29th of August we reached London, in the morning. Romney was delighted in accomplishing the double purpose of our excursion, and with the additional plea-

sure of conducting to Eartham, on the 2d of September, the young sculptor, whose head he was now eager to paint in the group of the four friends, that formed at this time his favorite occupation. Through the whole course of the autumn he was particularly active and happy. Among the several portraits he executed in the present year at Eartham, I must not omit to mention an excellent head of a most amiable medical friend, who had shewn much tender and generous attention to the artist for several years, in his transient fits of fanciful indisposition. He painted an admirable likeness of our friend William Guy, the surgeon of Chichester, whose countenance was doubly honored by a great poet, and a great painter; for Cowper said of him, that he won his heart at first sight; and Romney declared, that he had never examined any manly features, which he would sooner chuse for a model, if he had occasion to represent the compassionate benignity of our Saviour.

After painting with great spirit during the month of September at Eartham, Romney kindly proposed a

little excursion of pleasure, that we might gratify our student of sculpture, with a sight of the celebrated collection of statues at Wilton, and the stupendous scenery of Stonehenge. By passing two nights at Salisbury, the 2d and 3d of October, we saw with great ease and convenience the different objects of our curiosity, including also the interesting pictures at the seat of Lord Radnor. To Wilton we devoted the best part of a day. Romney expressed the most friendly delight in marking the lively intelligence, and the dawn of genius in his juvenile friend, who made a hasty sketch of an Amazon in the hall, and appeared so happy in first beholding Lord Pembroke's collection of antient art, that the kind painter said to him with great tenderness and spirit—"Tom, you and I will visit this scene again, in some future time of leisure, and obtain leave to draw here together for a month." A pleasant vision of benevolence and industry, that years of sickness and sorrow annihilated! But these days of social and studious entertainment were chearfully concluded by a brief visit to our pleasant friend of Wick-

ham, Dr. Warton. On the 6th of October, the old and the juevnile artists, after breakfasting with their kind patron, Lord Egremont, at Petworth, pursued their journey together, to resume their respective studies in London.

It was my lot to rejoin them much sooner than I had expected. The situation of a very dear friend, since dead, induced me to make a hasty visit to town for a few days in November: I found Romney, as the letters of my son had led me to apprehend, relapsing into lowness of spirits. He was however able to work on several large portraits. Towards the close of 1796, though still dejected, he began a picture of the respectable lecturer in philosophy, Mr. Walker and his family, a gentleman endeared to the painter by an intimacy of many years, and to me, by his kindness to my son. On the 25th of December, that young correspondent informed me, that Romney was preparing to finish the group in what he called his favorite picture of friendship, adding, that a poney recently purchased continued in high favor, and seemed to keep the

painter alive. His young friend had taken great delight in banishing his fears concerning the exercise of riding, and in making him a tolerable horseman. The new exercise was certainly of great service to his delicate health, but it could not eradicate the depressive malady which lurked in his singular frame, and often appeared to gain ground to the alarm and anxiety of his friends. In replying to my son on the day before the last of this year, 1796, I requested him to exhort and animate Romney to exert all his powers in finishing the head of Meyer and his own, in the group then under his pencil, and particularly to do more justice to his own expressive countenance, desiring him to remember, that as he was so kind as to paint his own features to please me, they ought to be full of intelligence and kindness, their proper and native characteristics.

It is rather surprising, that the artist whose pencil had delicately flattered so many faces, did not seem to think himself entitled to be commonly civil to his own. In the two pictures, where he was re-

quested to introduce a good resemblance of himself in the group of his friends. From an excess of modesty, or from capricious indolence, to which the most active mortals are now and then subject, he has so slighted each portrait of himself, in the two pictures I allude to, that both may be considered rather as caricatures, than fair likenesses of the painter. This is so much the case in his picture of the four friends, that a very judicious artist, who has great respect for the talents of Romney, and who wished to make a finished drawing of this group omitted the head in question, to avoid being an accomplice with a man of genius in treating his own character of countenance with such glaring injustice. Fortunately we have other representations of him more consonant to truth and nature. The portrait, that forms a frontispiece to this volume, represents him as he appeared in the most active season of his existence; and the head, towards the close of the book, drawn from the medallion executed by his friend the young sculptor, (a likeness happily caught in a chearful moment) ex-

presses with fidelity the tenderness of his character in the decline of life.

In the commencement of the year 1797, the spirits of Romney appear to have suffered still deeper depression, and his future years grew more and more gloomy from many symptoms of gradual decay. He yet took a tender interest in whatever related to his friend of Sussex, as the following letter will testify.

Jan. 7, 1797.

My dear friend,

I have not much to say concerning myself but that I have been extremely low-spirited and not able to work, which I feel as the worst of evils. I cannot neglect speaking of dear Tom, and the advancement he has made in art. I speak with admiration and love, on his last productions, they are of a pure gusto, they are original, and shew strength and improvement of mind: God prosper him, and he will one day make a figure.

I have not heard any thing of your new intended edifice. When is the first stone to be laid?

Commendations thus bestowed by age on youth, and those also given by youth to age, appear particularly valuable, when both are evidently the result of sensibility and truth. Under the influence of this idea, I shall not scruple to insert here a passage from

the letters of my son, in which he spoke of Romney with that respectful admiration and attachment, which great abilities, united to great benevolence, never to fail to produce in a young ingenuous mind. The date of the letter I allude to, is January 8, 1797. The juvenile writer, after some lively remarks on the dullness of long visits to the Houses of the opulent in London, proceeds thus:

But there is one great house, and really great man, whom it delights me to visit at any time: I mean our old, and kind friend, Mr. Romney, not only because he is an old, and very kind friend to me, but because I am certain, in the course of his conversation, of hearing some excellent sentiments and remarks; and of seeing some fine works of art, either antient or modern. He is so much alone, and sometimes so low spirited, that he takes it as a kindness in me to call, and sit with him an hour or two: wherefore I have a double pleasure in visiting him.

The next letter that I find of Romney, contains an anecdote concerning one of his most pleasing pictures, and also a striking proof of the sensibility, with which he contemplated the affliction of a lovely woman, whose person and talents he had greatly admired.

March 17, 1797.

My dear friend,

I have still been very poorly since I received your very kind letter, and consolotary invitation, but as I think I am getting

better, I may be able to travel down with Tom for a week or two. I am better in other respects, my feelings have undergone a change. In the first place I have sold my picture of the Indian Woman, for a good price. There is also a plan on foot to ornament St. Paul's with pictures and sculpture. Pray God it may succeed. What an opening for dear Tom.

Alas poor Hodges! his wife more to be lamented! I shall never forget what I saw one morning when I found her at breakfast with her little children; her voice and face more enchanting and beautiful than I had ever thought them before. The scene dwells upon my mind when I hear of her, poor woman! For the gratification of the same looks and voice, I think I could travel a hundred miles. I must content myself with the vision; the reality I shall never see again.

I saw the Bishop of Landaff yesterday, he expects us both at Calgarth Park in the summer. He goes in about a month—will you come to see him here before he goes?

Among the several projects of pleasure that interested the fancy and the heart of Romney, none seemed to please him more, than our purpose of accepting together an invitation to pass some time with the highly respected family at Calgarth Park; a purpose that time and chance never allowed us to accomplish, though we were equally disposed to honor the character, and to take a pride in the kindness,

which we both experienced, from the friend so justly described by Gibbon, as a prelate of a large and a liberal mind. Romney had painted the Bishop of Landaff with such fidelity of expression, that the portrait may be said to illustrate the brief but forcible eulogy of the historian.

The fancy-picture, which Romney mentioned as sold so much to his satisfaction, was purchased to adorn the costly mansion at Fonthill. The subject is from Shakespeare, Titania and the Indian votaress of her order, as described in Midsummer Night's Dream. Romney sketched his first idea of the scene many years before this period in oil-colours, at Eartham, and kindly gave it to my son. He afterwards painted the subject with variations on a larger canvas, of a different shape, with great care and felicity. There is infinite lustre, gaiety, and tenderness in this fanciful composition.

Romney had great esteem, and great pity for the amiable man, and unfortunate artist, whose cala-

mitous death he lamented in the last letter. He had testified his regard for him by painting, at his request, the small figure of Jaques, in the interesting landscape, from a scene in As You like it, on which Hodges was employed for the Shakespeare Gallery. Though the greater artist certainly worked with perfect good-will for his less prosperous brother, I cannot say that he worked happily on this occasion, for the figure, that he introduced appears not worthy of the landscape. Ill fortune seemed continually to attend all the exertions, and all the wishes of the kind-hearted and high-spirited Hodges. With uncommon industry, and considerable talents, he could not gain a comfortable subsistence by his art, and when, in honest indignation, he renounced the pencil for the more lucrative business of a provincial banker, the public storm, that shook even the bank of the nation, utterly overwhelmed this hapless adventurer, and all his hopes. Death delivered him from a scene of unmerited distress. Unhappy as he was, to an astonishing degree, in several incidents of his life, his destiny had given

him one blessing of superlative excellence. Perhaps there never existed a woman more truly amiable in person and talents, in manners and in heart than Mrs. Hodges. I believe I cannot act more in conformity to the feelings of Romney, than by inserting in the volume devoted to his personal history, a poetical tribute paid to the memory of this couple, (whom he tenderly regarded) in the following

EPITAPH,

ON

WILLIAM AND ANNE HODGES.

Ye men of genius, join'd to moral worth,
Whose merits meet no just rewards on earth,
Ye fair, who in your lot, tho' lovely, find
To grace and virtue fortune still is blind,
Sigh o'er the names recorded on this stone!
And feel for characters so like your own!
To active Hodges, who with zeal sublime,
Pursued the art, he lov'd, in every clime;
Who early traversing the globe with Cook,
Painted new life from nature's latent book;

Who with a spirit that no bars controul'd,
Labour'd in Indian heat, and Russian cold,
Yet clos'd (with virtues by the world allow'd)
A life of labour in affliction's cloud;
To him, whose name has well deserv'd to live,
This faithful record truth and friendship give,
Nor give to him alone, but doubly just
Hail his angelic Anna's hallow'd dust.
She lovely victim of affection true,
In pangs that piety could not subdue,
Perceiv'd (and felt the prospect a relief)
Her fair and gentle frame dissolv'd by grief.
Ye! who in virtuous love take tender pride,
Here honor her who as its martyr died.

The health of Romney revived a little, as the year 1797 advanced, he began to amuse his fancy with the prospect of his own intended building, and also with that of his friend in Sussex, to whose habitation he had promised to escort both the architect and the young sculptor. The trio of artists, arrived at Eartham on the 13th of April, and after a day of

repose, proceeded to the sea-coast, where they all took a lively interest in laying the foundations of a very small marine villa, in the Hamlet of Felpham. Its proprietor vainly hoped that it might conduce for many years, to the health and social enjoyments of the party, whose kind hearts gave utterance to the most fervent good wishes on its commencement. How merciful to man is that dispensation of Heaven, which allows him not to see far into futurity.

Our architectural ceremony was a cheerful scene of social delight, from the hope that all who shared in it, and particularly the two youngest might recollect and revisit the spot with pleasure, through a length of time to come; but what anguish of heart must have seized the joyous group engaged in founding this favorite little structure, had any prescience informed them that all the three artists, taking so kind an interest in the fabrick, would be sunk in the grave within the brief period of six years from its foundation! I am now sitting alone in the dwelling, which their kindness has endeared, and which their inge-

nuity has adorned; and I feel a tender gratification in employing the uncertain remnant of my days on such literary works, as may faithfully commemorate the talents and the virtues of those who still speak to me in their works, and here daily remind me both of their genius and their affection.

The kindness of Romney was further exerted this year in a second visit to Sussex. He came to Eartham again on the 29th of June, from a motive of great tenderness, to escort the young sculptor, then in a state of health, that filled Romney and me with great anxiety for him; though three of his medical friends, who all fatally mistook the seat of his malady, considered it of little moment. The affectionate spirit of his master, was also anxious that his disciple (as his lungs were affected, though without a cough) should breathe his native air for some time, and therefore most kindly suggested to him a plan, by which he might still pursue his professional studies in the gallery of his noble friend at Petworth. Romney allowing himself

only a single day of repose in the country, returned to business in town on the 1st of July.

We entertained a chearful hope that his very kind alertness in thus attending to the slightly injured health of the young invalide, would invigorate his own and enable him to advance with energy in his many projected works; but the first letter from him on his return soon destroyed this comfortable expectation.

July 12, 1797.

My dear friend,

I have been so much depressed in spirits, since I returned, that despair almost overturns me, and throws my building scheme almost to the ground.

I hope dear Tom's health is better, and that he is hard at work at Petworth. God preserve his health and he will take care of the rest. I shall be much obliged to you if you will suffer me to enjoy again the fine balsamic air of your country. If this agrees with your feelings, I hope to set forward towards the end of next week.

My son had appeared to revive by change of air; he and his father now therefore entreated Romney to hasten his return to Eartham, that they might

contribute as much as possible to his health, and amusement. He arrived on the 7th of August, with a fellow-traveller, the Reverend James Stanier Clarke. As the painter was too much of an invalide at this time to support any application to his own art, the young sculptor amused him by modelling his bust; it was a little less than life, a strong resemblance, a creditable work for so young an artist, and particularly successful in the great object of amusing and enlivening the friend, whose features it represented. On the 18th Romney visited the eastern part of our county under the conduct of Mr. Clarke, and returned alone to Eartham on the 24th. During the residue of the month, the two artists in a state between sickness and health employed their time chiefly in morning rides to the coast, for the sake of sea-bathing. On their return from Felpham one day at noon, they happened to be entertained by a succession of visiters, affording ample scope to meditation, in which Romney often loved to indulge, with a degree of solemn humour, resembling the moody reflexions of Jaques, in As You

like it. The visiters alluded to were three noble personages, now no more, the Duke of Richmond, the Dutchess of Devonshire, and Lord Thurlow. When they were all gone—" we have been honored by a curious trio of visiters to-day; (said Romney) grandeur! beauty! and genius! but all so much in their decline, that they now excite rather more pity, than admiration." The latter words of this remark were at this time very applicable to Romney himself. The discomfort of his nervous infirmities was sincerely pitied by a person highly qualified to appreciate, and ever inclined to admire, his genius.—" I am glad (said Flaxman, in a letter of September this year) I am heartily glad, that Mr. Romney has betaken himself to Sussex bathing, and friendly consolation for the recovery of his health and spirits, though it imposes hard duty upon you and friend Thomas. I hope your endeavours to revive him have been successful, and that the invalide enjoys his powers again, with tranquillity of mind. We all love his virtues, reverence his talents, and therefore cannot be indifferent to his welfare."

It was certainly a task of some anxious care to preserve in the mind of Romney, a tolerable degree of social serenity, when his health was disordered; for with great mental powers, he had never acquired that proper instantaneous command of an excellent understanding, so necessary to the preservation of mental peace; a species of dominion hardly ever acquired by any mortal of such exquisite sensibility; for his feelings were quick, and acute, to an astonishing and perilous degree. He was subject to "thick-coming fancies," concerning trivial variations in the symptoms of his health; but whatever trouble his friends of Eartham could take in their solicitude to restore him, it was abundantly compensated by the delight they took not only in his talents, but in his affectionate attachment to the scene, where he had now been a favorite guest more than twenty years.

The zeal which the young sculptor exerted in trying to chear and inspirit, the elderly declining

painter, was rewarded by the cordial gratification of seeing him not only perfectly sensible of such kindness, but also animated by the continual encouragement of his two friends to attempt, and accomplish new works of the pencil, which he had almost despaired of ever being able to resume.

He amused his imagination with his projected building, having discarded rather rashly, our very intelligent and honest architect on the idea of conducting the business more according to his own fancy. He made an excursion from Sussex to Hampstead, on the 6th. of September, to give directions to his workmen in the formation of a gallery for pictures, and statues; and returning to Eartham on the 10th. he painted there with spirit and success, to the end of the month. By a little sea-bathing and moderate exercise on horseback, he had so strengthened his tremulous nerves, that he became able to execute, what at first he was disposed from infirmity to decline, a portrait of Miss Le Clerc, which at the earnest request of his old acquaintance, the late Duke of Richmond,

he consented to undertake in his favorite painting room at Eartham.

The month of September appeared propitious to the works, both of the old, and the young artist; for the juvenile sculptor added in the course of it, the finishing touches to his bust of the painter, and completed a new bust of Lord Thurlow, who happening to reside at Bognor this season, visited Eartham repeatedly, and was so indulgent to this promising youth, as to sit to him, with great patience, while his unpractised hand was employed in modelling, perhaps the most awful features, that an artist so young, ever aspired to represent. The friendly affability of the learned peer on this singular occasion afforded me frequent opportunities for unreserved conversation with him: and in the course of it, I stated a question to this experienced judge of mankind, which he answered with a candid frankness. that proved he was aware of his own mental peculiarities. Our mutual concern for Romney's health led us to speak on the singular state of his mind, and on the various mental infirmities

so apt to overcloud the evening of life. In discussing this copious topic, I asked my contemplative visiter, if he could resolve the following question:—suppose two men of very powerful minds, but of minds differently exercised in different lines of life, one for instance continually employed in scientific researches, and the other in pursuits of imagination; if both their minds begin to shew symptoms of decline at the same age, which of the two will be troubled with the darkest and most oppressive mental infirmities, the man of reason, or the man of fancy? assuredly the man of reason said Lord Thurlow;—I could not help repeating inwardly to myself,

"*His own example strengthens all his Laws;*"

silently comparing the fits of spleen, to which this noble Lord, and our friend Romney, were occasionally subject: the spleen of Romney burst out in rapid and transient flashes, like the explosion of a rocket: the spleen of Lord Thurlow rolled forth in

a gloomy volume like an eruption of smoke, followed by fluent fire, from the labouring Vesuvio.

Different as these two memorable men appeared in their studies, in the texture, of their nerves, and in their public capacities they greatly resembled each other in one particular: whenever they wished to please, the stile and tone of their conversation united uncommon charms of entertaining vivacity and of delicate politeness.

Let me now return to the paintings of Romney at Eartham. Besides the portrait I have mentioned, he began two historical pictures representing his friends, the father and son, in the characters of Tobit and Tobias. The first, in which the youth prepares to heal the blindness of his father, was considerably advanced in both the figures. Romney conveyed it to London, intending to finish it speedily, but I believe he never touched it again, and I know not its fate. The second sketch, in which Tobias looks with tender exultation on the restored eyes of the old man, was a

little more than the hasty work of half an hour; but the face of the youth (brief beginning as it is) has such felicity of expression, and appears so sweetly perfect as a resemblance of him, who stood for the features, that it has been preserved with the fondest care and delight; it is valued as the singular production of such happy moments, as genius itself cannot command or recall.

After exercising his art again with such personal comfort and animation, as he apprehended his dejected spirits could never regain, Romney prepared for his return to London with chearful hopes concerning his own improved health, and that of his young friend; hopes that a very few years were destined to terminate in the darkest affliction!

Although cheared by this double prospect of reviving health, Romney felt himself affected with peculiar tenderness in taking leave of Eartham this year, as his old companion of that favorite spot had thoughts of resigning it to a tenant in the following spring,

and of retiring to the little marine villa, which he had begun to form and to regard, according to a phrase of Pliny, as the nest of old age. The probability, that they should never converse again in the beautiful scene, which had been favorable during so many years to their cheerful intercourse, and to their social studies gave a sort of melancholy charm to the last evening, that the two old fellow-students passed at Eartham this Autumn, a circumstance, to which Romney alludes in the first letter after his return to London.

London, October 10, 1797.

My dear friend,

Since I returned, and have looked round me, I find, that I have a very fine gallery to rest my mind upon. It may hatch some future projects that may amuse, and perhaps delight me.

I grow anxious to hear how things are proceeding with you and dear Tom. I hope he is advancing, with great spirit, his fine antique figure, which I think will do him great credit, as well as his extraordinary head of Lord Thurlow. I still look back with a tender regard for the peaceful shades of Eartham, and almost sigh for some of its social walks, that probably I may never see more. Adieu dear Eartham! and its inhabitants, adieu!

The antique figure, which the painter mentioned

so kindly in this letter, was a small copy in clay, that his young friend was executing at Petworth, a sitting philosopher, the size of life in marble, and dignified with the name of Seneca. The copy was thought highly creditable to the young artist; but I do not mean in this work to expatiate on any productions of this very dear student; I shall endeavour to mention him only incidentally, as connected with his constant friend and admirer the main subject of this memorial. In the commencement of 1798, the health of Romney appeared to improve in a very promising degree. My son, who had returned to his studies in London gave me the following account of him in January.

I worked yesterday on my little copy of your portrait, at the good painter's who is very much pleased with it, as far as it is done. He has acquired excellent spirits by walking to, and from Hampstead, an exercise that does him more good than riding. He works now with spirit, and he has found his long lost picture of Cupid and Psyche, which he is soon to finish.

The picture, here mentioned as newly found, was a work, that Romney began many years before this period: it represented with great tenderness and

delicacy of expression, the two most interesting of allegorical personages. In design and colouring it was rather a favorite production with the painter himself, and he had promised to complete it for a friend, whom he highly regarded, and saw continually in London; but such was the multitude of sitters perpetually engaging his attention, that I believe this long neglected performance never received the finishing touches of his hand.

I have introduced the circumstance of the young sculptor's copying a portrait in the house of Romney, that I may not omit to mention with due praise, an instance of the painter's considerate attention and forecast in favor of his juvenile companion. In his attendance on Romney at Eartham in the course of the two last years, he had been tempted to handle his pencils in oil colours, and executed a large portrait of a favorite spaniel with such fidelity and force of expression, that his generous old friend said to him with infinite tenderness: " My dear Tom, I seriously

believe you might surpass me in my own profession; but you have chosen, I think, the nobler art of the two, and I heartily wish, and expect, to see you prosper in it, under your incomparable master: yet I think you will do well to acquire the management of colours, which seems already a matter of such ease to you, because if the more laborious process of sculpture should chance to be any ways injurious to your health, you will then have the immediate resource of a second profession!" With these friendly ideas, Romney encouraged the young student to persevere in his ambitious desire of trying to make himself able to acquire distinction in either art. Indeed the constant readiness of Romney to befriend every young person, whom he could assist, or encourage in professional pursuits, was a striking feature of his character; and in the course of his active life, he enjoyed many opportunities of exerting such considerate and useful benevolence to a variety of persons. At this period he looked on my son with an eye of very tender anxiety concerning his health; and so did

more than one of the young student's medical friends, who to equal kindness added great professional experience and sagacity. They all, and Romney in particular, exhorted me to convey him again into that air, by which he had been so evidently revived during his last residence in the South. His strength was so much impaired, that the journey fatigued him extremely. His difficulty of breathing encreased. His medical friend of Sussex still thought with those, who had attended him with equal kindness in London, that his complaint was not of dangerous tendency, but merely seated in the muscles of the breast, and probably contracted from the habit of sitting many hours and bending forward to draw. Encreasing langour and pain soon proved, that all the sufferer's medical advisers had laboured under an astonishing and perilous mistake. In March it was discovered, that all the symptoms which they supposed to arise from a trifling injury on the muscles of the breast, had really proceeded from that very formidable malady, a curvature of the spine. Sanguine hopes were still entertained, that a clear detection of the disorder would

lead to a speedy cure; but mistake in the first treatment of internal maladies has a fatal tendency, and I have specified the medical error which proved so deadly to this lamented youth, in the hope, that his sufferings may conduce to preserve others in similar circumstances from becoming victims of a similar mistake. Romney however still looked forward with a lively hope of witnessing the recovery of his young friend, and of promoting his future studies, a hope that he expressed in the following letter.

April 18, 1797.

My dear friend,

I am much concerned to hear of dear Tom's indifferent health, and the langour that accompanies the complaint. I hope summer will complete his recovery, and that I may see you and him the next winter upon the hill at Hampstead, where I hope to have my new mansion thoroughly dried, fit for your reception, and my gratification, as it is now in a very advanced state, and much to my liking. It will equal my most ardent expectation in every respect for beauty and convenience.

Mr. Cocking has been ill of a slow fever ever since you left London, and I am afraid it will continue much longer. I have intended to go into the north as soon as I can, and to continue there two or three months, which I hope will restore an enfeebled constitution.

My Hampstead-house will be very warm, and very convenient for every study. I really think it may be a desirable plan for dear Tom to come and

stay for two or three months, and employ his masterly hand there after his recovery I hope by this time he is in a fair way, and may soon begin to practice his art again. I have suffered much lately with relaxation and debility. Tell me particularly how Tom is, and I beg you will let me hear from you soon.

The Mr. Cocking mentioned in this letter, was at this time the guest of the writer. He was a man of simple manners, and solid integrity; he had been intimate with Romney in early life, and came from the north for the kind purpose of superintending the declining health of his old friend, when he unfortunately contracted that severe lingering low fever which rendered him so unfit for his benevolent intention. He was the son of a writing master in Kendal, and in exercising the same humble profession he had contrived to acquire extensive knowledge and to compose some works of considerable merit; one of these I shall have occasion to mention in noticing his death, which happened before that of Romney, with whom he continued to reside.

The tender spirits of the artist, were much affected by the illness of his different friends and this year

was so unpropitious to the exercise of his pencil, that he advanced in no very interesting picture, and did little, I believe, except trying to finish some of his neglected portraits. I endeavoured to dissipate his melancholy by imparting to him my improving hopes concerning the restoration of his favorite young friend. His reply shewed too clearly that his own dejection had encreased to a deplorable degree.

Having occasion to make a brief visit to London in May, I found him with an appearance of health in his countenance, yet complaining of extreme weakness, not visible in his limbs, but affecting his mind. Few conditions in human existence appear more pitiable than that degree of weakness, produced by excessive application to a favorite study, when a man of a very active and enterprizing spirit, finds that his faculties are beginning to desert him. Such was the state of my unhappy friend at this time. His mind was full of noble desires and intentions to form a little domestic academy, and improve himself in directing

the studies of a few selected young friends and disciples. Had he entered on such a beneficent project earlier in life, he might possibly have produced much good; but he was now greatly enervated by that premature old age, which he had brought upon himself by excessive application to his art, and by the unwholesome custom of painting in a room immoderately hot. At present he suffered much from lassitude of body, and restlessness of mind; yet he looked forward, with some degree of hope, to expected seasons of more personal comfort and activity. Before I left him, I had the pleasure of attending him to the family of our departed friend Meyer, a family, who had cheared his spirits in a former fit of depression. Here he was again very chearfully amused by sitting to a lady of the house, for his portrait; it was an extempore production; a rapid sketch; but a very striking resemblance.

I will not dismiss my old companion from the house of our friends at Kew, without indulging my-

self in the gratification of observing, that the house contains a pleasing proof of that attentive and fervent kindness, and liberality, with which Romney in his days of energy delighted to gratify the feelings of his particular friends. I allude to a picture of George Meyer, the eldest son of the artist. When that highly promising youth, who rose to singular distinction, both as an Oriental scholar, and as a public character, in India, was preparing to embark for that country, Romney, perfectly sensible of all, that his parents must feel in parting from such a son, entreated their permission to present to them his portrait, which he executed with a felicity of pencil, that gave the most desirable effect to the consolatory benevolence of his intention.

But the hand, that had so often laboured with kind and disinterested zeal to gratify the eyes of friendship and of parental affection, seemed now in danger of losing all its firmness and power. Romney felt that he could not paint with ease and satisfaction to himself, and therefore hastened into the air of his

native country. The climate of the north, and of the south, for he tried them both in the course of this summer, proved equally inefficacious to relieve him from that nervous infirmity, and inquietude, which proceeded from a life of intense application, not conducted with due regard to the security of health.

On hearing in August, that he was returned not well from the north, I wrote to remind him how often he had found his injured nerves new braced and invigorated by the marine air of Sussex. He passed some part of September at Felpham, and took a very anxious and kind interest in all the severe discipline, by which the medical friends of the young sculptor, who had now lost the free use of his limbs, were endeavouring to preserve his life. I still cherished a sanguine hope, that I might yet enjoy the delight of beholding both the young and the elderly artist, restored by the mercy of heaven to a cheerful exercise of their suspended talents, and I am truly thankful, that I enjoyed this delight in a future season, though

by no means so complete, or so permanent, as I had fondly expected.

This Autumn was peculiarly unpropitious to the pencil, and it was the only Autumn of the last twenty three, in which I had the mortification of seeing Romney in a state of absolute manual inactivity, and mental discomfort. He grew impatient to revisit his new building at Hampstead, and returned from Felpham to London, on the 11th. of September. A desire to obtain as much knowledge, as I could, that might promote the mitigation, if not the cure of the severe personal calamity, by which my son was afflicted, induced me to pass some weeks in town, towards the end of this year. I found Romney much dejected in his new mansion on the hill of Hampstead, for want of occupation and society: I advised him to employ himself a little with his pencil, and offered to sit to him merely for his amusement. He began a head, the first attempt in his new painting room, and though his hand shook a little, yet he made a very creditable beginning, that pleased himself. The next morning

he advanced his sketch more happily, as the very effort of beginning to work again under the encouragement of an old friend, seemed to have done him great good.

The singular fabrick, that Romney had now completed for his residence at Hampstead, was particularly suited to his own fancy. He had an excellent spacious gallery for the display of statues and pictures, and without moving from his pillow, he could contemplate from his own chamber window, a very magnificent view of the metropolis. This situation and these advantages, might have led him to execute many glorious works, had the native strength of his mind and body been unimpaired, or only so injured as to admit of restoration, but his admirable faculties were deplorably shaken, and undermined: still his imagination could at times amuse him with grand projects, and his affectionate heart still delighted in the idea, that he might prove a valuable instructor to some deserving youths devoted to art, particularly my son, and young Mr. Isaac Pocock; the latter now attended him as a

highly promising domestic disciple, and indeed, in his present state, a most desirable companion. It was a comfort to me to perceive, that it was yet possible to animate the spirits of this beloved and dejected artist to a little chearful exertion. My success in such endeavours I imparted to his young suffering friend in Sussex, by the following account of my intercourse with him at this period.

November 14, 1798.

It will please you to hear I have so happily stimulated our Caro Pittore to new exertions in his suspended art, that he has just declared in ending a long and prosperous mornings work, that the recent head on his canvas, is one of the best he ever painted. He has drawn it in the same point of view, as the head of the same person in the large picture with you and Flaxman, which he intends to improve from this, changing both the drapery and the countenance. Your portrait there, and Flaxman's he considers as very strong and pleasing resemblances, and he proposes to bring his own and mine up to the same degree of excellence, that the whole picture may be equally admirable. His success in working this morning has proved medicinal to his spirits.

As we readily believe what we strongly wish, I was sanguine in my persuasion, that by exhorting Romney to fresh and fearless exercise of his pencil,

I might render him the most friendly service; but I am now inclined to think, there was more of kindness than of discretion, in that idea; whenever there is a perceptible decline, occasioned by age, in the mental and manual powers of a man, who has obtained celebrity in any art or profession, perhaps it should be the aim of sincere friendship to lead him, if his circumstances allow it, to what Pope calls

"*The science of retreat,*"

It is however, as he describes it, *a hard science*, to know exactly when to retire; although as that amiable moralist Mackenzie observes in his Man of Feeling:—"There is a certain dignity in retiring from life at a time when the infirmities of age have not sapped our faculties." True as this maxim must appear to all, men are naturally unwilling to relinquish utterly those implements of ingenuity, which they have been used to exercise with dexterity, and applause; their friends are apt to mistake an incurable decay of nature, for an oppression of accident, which

they vainly hope to relieve, and under the influence of that mistake excite the declining veteran to labour, when they should only persuade him to rest. The excellent admonition that Horace gives to an author.

"*Solve senescentem mature sanus equum*"

is perhaps peculiarly applicable to an artist. Indeed it is applicable to mortals of every description, and I feel its general propriety so much at this time, that I am anxious to conclude and deliver this often interrupted work to the public, lest by my own advance in the vale of years, I may be found trespassing against the very maxim, which I am here recommending to others. I did not, I confess, recommend it to Romney at the period, when, as I have since discovered reason to believe, it might have been more seasonable for him, than an opposite suggestion. I exhorted him to new efforts, not knowing, at the time, what, since his decease, I have learned from his son, that one day before he quitted London, and while he was eagerly employed on the chief of his

designs to represent the various ages of man, he felt a slight paralytic stroke, which in his own opinion affected in some degree both his eye, and his hand. This circumstance probably prevented his attempting to execute the improvements, which as I have just related, he intended to introduce into his large picture. There might be more imbecillity of pencil in his latter productions, than either Romney or his friend perceived at the time, when his being able still to amuse himself with his colours, was a high gratification to both. His work afforded amusement also to the younger invalide, as my letters to my son related to him the cheerful progress of his old friend in resuming the pencil. With this circumstantial narrative I will not detain my readers, but they may be amused with an extract of one anecdote from the letters, I allude to, as it shews how strongly the painter could yet feel the beauties of a very fine picture.

December 3, 1798.

I read your excellently clear description of yourself to Dr. Milman, this morning, and he confirmed the delightful pre-

sage of your approaching recovery. This friendly and accomplished physician possesses some of the very finest pictures, I believe, in the world. He has one, a Saint Agatha, by Guido, superior in EXPRESSION *(the beauty, anguish, and christian triumph of a lovely martyr!) to every work of art, on a similar subject, that I ever beheld. He indulged me in the privilege of introducing Romney to see it to-day, and our Caro Pittore said with great feeling and spirit:—" I have never seen Guido till this morning."—He was in a deplorable state of nerves when he entered the physician's house, but the sight of a lovely Saint by Corregio, and this superior and divine picture of Guido, proved (as I hoped they might) a most efficacious medicine, and gave him new life for the day.*

A subsequent letter of the same month, relates that Romney had just sold the lease of his house, in Cavendish Square, to Mr. Shee, and was engaged in clearing a chaos of tattered canvas, and sending cart loads of unfinished pictures and drawings from his old house in town, to his residence on the hill of Hampstead. I left him in this new mansion so well prepared for the exercise of art, and surrounded by such loads of unfinished works, as might supply him with amusing occupation through many years of active health. Such alas! from the shattered state of his nerves, he had little prospect of enjoying; still however his sanguine friends of Sussex, closed the year, not without

a hope, that the recent exercise of his pencil, which had appeared to inspirit him so much, might lead to more happy exertion.

I am now arrived at the last of the many years, in which I had the gratification of receiving Romney at Eartham. To that favorite spot my son had returned at his own desire, with the approbation of our medical friend, from the milder air of Felpham, on the third of January, 1799; and in the course of the month, I received a flattering request from Romney, conveyed to me in a letter from one of our friends, that he also might pass some time in the scene, to which we were all partial. The young artist was particularly glad to receive him, and I desired him to bring his disciple, the fellow student and friend of my son. They arrived on the 7th. of February, and to encourage both the old and the young painter, in a connexion, that seemed useful and honorable to both, I addrest to my juvenile guest, the following

SONNET.

Ingenious son of an ingenious sire!
Pocock! with friendly joy I saw thee start
For honor's goal in the career of art;
And gladly bid the pencil-praising lyre
Applaud thy early skill, and just desire.
Long be it thine to play a filial part,
Pupil of docile mind, and duteous heart!
By honoring Romney's age his powers acquire!
Unchill'd by time for those enchanting powers
His bard with love and admiration glows;
May the great artist, in deserv'd repose,
Enjoy of glorious life his evening hours!
Round him improving youth new lustre throws,
And consecrates his fame in friendship's bowers.

The arrival of his pleasing fellow-student so enlivened the young sculptor, that it tempted him to resume a pencil, unable as he was to hold it, except in such positions of his injured frame, as allowed but a very slender portion of force and freedom to the hand. Still his love of art, and social study, tri-

umphed over his personal calamity. He worked a little himself, and encouraged both the old, and the young painter (who admired his astonishing patience and alacrity of spirit) to continual exertions of the pencil. We all united our influence to reanimate the dejected Romney. He was inspirited by our united exhortations to such a degree, that he began a drawing of his two juvenile friends, one resting on the other, and to shew the fervency of his re-kindled spirit he made a fresh historical sketch from a scene in Macbeth. On the first of March, he began another portrait of himself, in spectacles. It was a singularly affecting sight to behold youth and age struggling under the severe disadvantage of personal calamities, different in their nature, to exert all the talents, that affection could still induce them to call forth: while Romney with an infirm hand, was forming a new resemblance of himself, to gratify both his old and young companions, the interesting cripple contrived in his uneasy recumbent posture to execute his sketch of the dying Demosthenes, to decorate his father's Poem on Sculpture.

Romney on the 6th. of March, completed his own portrait, and on the following day, returned with his promising pupil, Mr. Isaac Pocock, to his mansion at Hampstead, having previously declared himself wonderfully revived by his residence of a few weeks in the south. Indeed the impression left by this visit on my own mind from the comfortable recruit of spirits, that my old friend appeared to derive from it was so pleasing, that I could now wish it had proved our last interview; but I saw him once more at Hampstead on the 28th of April; when I had the grief of perceiving, that his encreasing weakness of body, and mind, afforded only a gloomy prospect for the residue of his life. He soon afterwards retired to Kendal, where he had the comfort of finding an attentive affectionate nurse, in a most exemplary wife, who had never been irritated to an act of unkindness, or an expression of reproach, by his years of absence and neglect. His early and long estrangement from a virtuous partner and parent, so mild and meritorious, was the great error of his life ; it appears the more pitiable as it proceeded originally from mistaken ideas

of professional ambition, and it continued from that awkward pride, by which men of quick and apprehensive spirits are too frequently deterred from confessing, and correcting their own misconduct.

In his letters to me from Kendal my old friend did not fail to do full, though late, justice to the virtues of his excellent wife. He spoke of her kind attention with the tenderest gratitude, and professed himself as comfortable in her indulgent care of him, as with nerves so shaken, he could expect to be. He informed me, that although obliged to renounce oil colours, he could sometimes amuse himself in sketching a portrait in crayons, and had pleased himself in purchasing *a pretty large estate* in that country: I use the words of the faithful Mr. Cocking, who, as the hand of my infirm old friend, was no longer able to guide a pen, obligingly acted as his secretary, in a letter of kind condolence on the death of my son in the spring of 1800. In the distress of my heart on that event, I had some degree of mournful satisfaction in thinking, that age and infirmity had diminished that extreme

acuteness of feeling in my old friend, which would otherwise have rendered his sufferings on the occasion deplorably poignant, for he not only loved the young artist sincerely, but had indulged his own fervent fancy in such enthusiastic expectations of his future excellence in art, as human faculties hardly could realize. Much perhaps might be fairly expected from the industrious health of a youth, whose patience and mild magnanimity were so exemplary, that during the lingering tortures of a very long illness, he never uttered a single murmur, and accounted for the astonishing serenity of his spirit, by observing, that he thought it the duty of a mortal not to complain of corporeal anguish, because our Saviour himself was sanctified by suffering.

In the spring of 1801, Romney lost his worthy amanuensis Mr. Cocking: he died under the roof of his friend, sincerely regretted by all, who understood the value of his upright and unassuming character. His devout spirit is tenderly displayed in a posthumous poem of considerable length, entitled the Rural Sab-

bath in four books. This respectable work was published with a few other poems in 1805, with a concise and just account of their author, one of those contemplative poets (to describe him in an expressive verse of his own.)

" *Who love their God, and wish the good of man.*"

I had some further epistolary intercourse with the painter on the subject of pictures before he lost his domestic secretary, and once on a very pleasing occasion: I will briefly mention the circumstance. When Lady Hamilton returned from Naples, she expressed to me the most friendly solicitude concerning the health of our beloved artist, and an anxious wish concerning a portrait of herself, which he had most kindly intended to present to her mother. On hearing these particulars, Romney replied in a letter dated Kendal, December 7, 1800.

What you say respecting Lady Hamilton gives me great pleasure indeed; if the picture, you mention, be at Hampstead, I shall be happy in gratifying her mother with it, and I trust you will take the trouble of conveying it to her in the properest manner.

I had the good fortune to find, and present, this admirable portrait, according to the request of the painter, on the 13th of December, 1800. In the letter, that conveyed to me the thanks of my old friend for my having executed a commission so consonant to the kindness of his heart, he said,

The pleasure I should receive from a sight of the amiable Lady Hamilton, would be as salutary, as great; yet I fear, except I should enjoy more strength and better spirits at a better time of the year, I shall never be able to see London again: I feel every day greater need of care and attention, and here I experience them in the highest degree.

In the last letter, which I received from this dear declining friend, he said, with particular satisfaction, that the post had just brought him good tidings of his brother, the Colonel, which led him to hope, that he was then on his return from the East Indies to England. Romney had ever shewn a paternal spirit, as I have already observed, toward his brothers. The return of the Colonel was an event, that he most tenderly and anxiously expected. The Colonel arrived indeed in time to see his generous fraternal patron alive, but the account, that the former gave me

of their meeting, is such, as I can hardly write without a painful shudder of the heart. The invalide did not recollect the brother, whom he had so anxiously wished to see; on being asked if he did not know him, he looked eagerly in his face, burst into an agony of tears, that spoke his tender remembrance, and then immediately lost all recollection of his person and character. He remained for some time in that state of existence, which is infinitely more afflicting to the friends, who behold, than to the mortal, who endures it. In November, 1802, he sunk into a grave, which Mr. Cumberland has called (though I think improperly) *inglorious*: surely the talents, and the virtues of our departed friend,were sufficient to dignify any sepulchre, in which it could be his destiny to rest. He expired at Kendal on the 15th. and on the 19th. he was buried, where he was born, at Dalton. His grave, instead of proving inglorious, will probably be visited by many a traveller, who may either remember with tenderness the energetic charm

of his conversation, or may have a heart to revere the fascinating powers of his pencil.

The person of Romney was rather tall, his features were broad and strong, his hair was dark, his eyes indicated much vigour, and still more acuteness of mind. The feature of the human visage, which he considered as the surest index of the heart, was in his own countenance very remarkable. By the quick or tardy movement of the fibres around the lips, he was accustomed to estimate the degrees of sensibility in his sitters; and of himself, in this particular, it might have been said with truth,

His own example strengthens all his laws:
He is himself, THE SENSITIVE *he draws.*

For his heart had all the tenderness of nature; never I believe, were the lips of any man more quick to quiver with emotions of generous pity at the sight of distress, or at the relation of a pathetic story. His feelings indeed were perilously acute. They made

him a man of many frailties, but the primary characteristic of his nature was that true christian charity, which more than compensates for manifold imperfections: he had a deep and cordial veneration for the Saviour of mankind, and was doubly attached to the religion of Christ. In his season of mental health, it animated and delighted his mind, in furnishing the finest subjects for the exercise of his art, and still more as affording the only ground for a steadfast hope of eternal felicity. His piety, which was sincere, was not the produce of study, but the offspring of feeling. He was often disposed to direct his eye to the face of heaven, and read in the skies, with a contemplative and devout spirit, both the power and the beneficence of God. He used to say, that he could find every sentiment in the variations of colouring, that he observed in the clouds. It must however be confessed, that with him, as with most men, a quickness of perception to feel and acknowledge the attributes of his Maker, had infinitely more influence on the contemplations of his mind, than on the conduct of his life. Sensible that the profession of a painter exposes a frail mortal to pecu-

liar temptations, Romney was anxious to guard his pupils against the perils of immorality by the kindest admonition; a proof of his considerate benevolence, which his worthy disciple Mr. Robinson related to me, with expressions of the warmest regard and veneration for his memory. As a companion, Romney was uncommonly entertaining from the force and originalityof his ideas. Though he had not the advantages of a polished education, his extreme sensibility gave a great delicacy to his manners, especially in the company of ladies: he rapidly gained their esteem, and they delighted in his conversation. In the course of his annual visits to Sussex, a lady of brilliant talents, and extensive reading, who has long been dead, used to say, "I love to meet Romney at Eartham, because I am sure of hearing from him such remarks, as we hear from no other mortal." I have often regretted, that I never formed a collection of his pointed sayings, for I am confident I might have preserved several, that would not have disgraced the pages of a Cæsar or Bacon, who were both collectors of apophthegms. I recollect one of

his replies to the questions of a lady, that afforded some surprize and pleasure to a little party of his admirers in Sussex. The conversation happened to turn on the effects of emulation among artists—a lady observed, that "it often produced evil, but (she added) it appears necessary to call forth their talents, for if you take away the spirit of emulation, there seems nothing left to animate the genius of a painter."—"Yes, Madam, (replied Romney) there is; and a more powerful incentive to laudable exertion."—"Pray Sir what is it?"—"Religion, Madam." replied the serious artist. The force and justice of his reply was duly felt, and acknowledged. Indeed Romney often painted under the influence of this sublime principle; he frequently considered the act of painting as an act of devotion, in which he was expressly thankful to heaven for such talents, as were given him, by his solicitude to exert them in a manner, that might conduce to the great interests of mankind. Had he retained health enough to complete his projected picture of the temptation in the wilderness as happily as he had begun it, in the figure of our Savi-

our, it might have proved a glorious monument of his devout and laudable ambition. Were I required to declare what particular picture among the finished works of Romney, I regard as the most excellent, I should say, without hesitation, his infant Shakespeare nursed by Tragedy and Comedy, in the possession of Mr. Newberry, engraved by his friendly permission to decorate this tribute to the memory of the great artist, whom we equally esteemed. This picture has charms of expression not inferior to the finest Greek gems; each figure is perfect in its character, and the whole is beautifully composed: with great admiration for the art of the Greeks, we may doubt if their sculpture, or their painting, if either Phidias or Apelles could have expressed the dawn of dramatic genius in an infant bard, with greater feeling, or greater felicity. Romney in this performance has rivalled the tenderness of pencil, and the graceful sweetness of expression, that he greatly admired in his favorite Corregio. I decline making any farther remarks on other productions of his pencil, because I am eager to see the merits of the painter fairly stated to the world.



The Infant Shakespeare

Engraved by Caroline Watson, Engraver to Her Majesty, from the original Picture in the possession of Francis Newbury Esq.

When Romney, in his happiest hour, designd
The Muses fostering young Shakespeares Mind.
Nature surveyed them all with fond regard,
And ownd the Painter worthy of the Bard.

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not only with the warmth and sincerity of a friend, but with the judgment and authority of an approved artist. I therefore hasten to present to my reader, what I have just received, the following

SKETCH

OF

ROMNEY'S PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER,

BY FLAXMAN.

ACCORDING to the maxim, that "every painter paints himself," each picture presents in some measure a transcript of its author's merits and defects. The judicious eye will easily discern whether the work was produced with sensibility, or want of feeling; the choice and treatment of the subject will discover whether his mind was elevated or low, as the detail of parts will explain in what branches of knowledge he was skilled or deficient, to what extent he had chosen and analyzed the beauties of nature, and finally

whether the work was accomplished by painful patient labour, or flowed with ease and rapidity, which increased the delight and exultation of the progress. These characteristics may be as easily traced in the works of Romney, as in those of any artist that ever existed. Modest in his opinion of his own talents, he practised no tricks or deception to obtain popularity, but as he loved his art fervently, he practised it honestly, with indefatigable study and application. The circumstances of his early life seemed wholly unpropitious to the study of painting. His school education was brief and common, as he was brought up to the business of a cabinet maker. Yet these obstacles great and insurmountable as they would have been to many, were by him converted into so many steps in the ascent to excellence. If his memory was not much exercised in learning words at school, some of his other faculties were not idle. His contemplative mind was employed in observing carefully, inquiring minutely into, and reflecting continually on the objects around him, and thus by comparing and adding the results of his own observation, with the little he

was taught, he gained perhaps as much useful knowledge as is commonly acquired, in the ordinary way, with greater assistance from books and masters. His employment of cabinet making, which to a common observer, would seem little better than an ingenious mechanical drudgery, led his inquisitive mind to contemplate the principles of mathematical science, and to acquaint himself with the elements of architecture. When he first began to paint, he had seen no gallery of pictures, nor the fine productions of ancient sculpture; but men, women and children were his statues, and all objects under the cope of heaven formed his school of painting. The rainbow, the purple distance, or the silver lake, taught him colouring; the various actions and passions of the human figure, with the forms of clouds, woods, mountains or valleys afforded him studies of composition. Indeed his genius bore a strong resemblance to the scenes he was born in; like them it partook of the grand and beautiful; and like them also, the bright sunshine and enchanting prospects of his fancy, were occasionally overspread

with mist and gloom. Among his early productions two very opposite subjects proved the versatility of his talents. The comic arrival of Dr. Slop, at Shandy-hall, was one; the other was the death of General Wolfe, painted the size of life, universally admired for its sentiment and nature by crouds of spectators at the first exhibition in the Strand. On his arrival in Italy, he was witness to new scenes of art, and sources of study, of which he could only have supposed previously, that something of the kind might exist; for he there contemplated the purity and perfection of ancient sculpture, the sublimity of Michael Angelo's Sistine Chapel, and the simplicity of Cimabue's and Giotto's schools. He perceived these qualities distinctly, and judiciously used them in viewing and imitating nature; and thus his quick perception, and unwearied application enabled him by a two year's residence abroad, to acquire as great a proficiency in art, as is usually attained by foreign studies of much longer duration. After his return the novelty and sentiment of his original subjects were universally admired. Most of these were of the delicate class, and each had its peculiar

character. Titania with her Indian votaress was arch and sprightly; Milton dictating to his daughters was solemn and interesting. Several pictures of Wood Nymphs and Bacchants, charmed by their rural beauty, innocence, and simplicity. From the Triumphs of Temper he painted several pictures of Serena, all beautiful in idea, and striking in situation. But the most pathetic perhaps of all his works was never finished: Ophelia, with the flowers, she had gathered, in her hand, sitting on the branch of a tree, which was breaking under her, whilst the melancholy distraction visible in her lovely countenance, accounts for the insensibility to her danger. Few painters have left so many examples in their work of the tender and delicate affections, and several of his pictures breathe a kindred spirit with the Sigismonda of Corregio. His cartoons, some of which have unfortunately perished, were examples of the sublime and terrible, at that time perfectly new in English art. The dream of Atossa, from the Persians of Æschylus, contrasted the death-like sleep of the Queen, with the Bacchanalian Fury of the Genius of Greece. The composition was conducted

with the fire and severity of a Greek bas-relief: the ghost of Darius, with the Persians prostrated before him, awed the spectator by grandeur and mystery. As Romney was gifted with peculiar powers for historical and ideal painting, so his heart and soul were engaged in the pursuit of it, whenever he could extricate himself from the importunate business of portrait painting. It was his delight by day and study by night, and for this his food and rest were often neglected. In trying to attain excellence in his art, his diligence was as unceasing, as his gratification in the employment. He endeavoured to combine all the possible advantages of the subject immediately before him, and to exclude whatever had a tendency to weaken it. His compositions, like those of the ancient pictures, and basso relievos, told their story by a single group of figures in the front, whilst the back ground is made the simplest possible, rejecting all unnecessary episode, and trivial ornament, either of secondary groups or architectural subdivision, In his compositions the beholder was forciby struck by the sentiment at the first glance, the gradations and varieties of

which he traced through several characters, all conceived in an elevated spirit of dignity and beauty, with a lively expression of nature in all the parts. His heads were various: the male were decided and grand; the female lovely: his figures resembled the antique; the limbs were elegant, and finely formed; his drapery was well understood, either forming the figure into a mass with one or two deep folds only, or by its adhesion and transparency discovering the form of the figure, the lines of which were finely varied, with the union or expansion of spiral or cascade folds, composing with, or contrasting the outline and chiaro oscuro: he was so passionately fond of Grecian sculpture, that he had filled his study and galleries with fine casts from the most perfect statues, groups, basso relievos, and busts of antiquity: he would sit and consider these in profound silence by the hour; and besides the studies in drawing or painting he made from them, he would examine them under all the changes of sunshine and day-light; and with lamps prepared on purpose at night, he would try their effects lighted from above, beneath, and in all directions, with rapturous

admiration. No one could be more modest concerning himself; seldom speaking of any thing he did, and never in reference to its merits. But he was exceedingly liberal respecting others, rarely finding faults in the works of his contemporaries, and giving cordial praise wherever he saw excellence. An instance of his conduct relating to Sir Joshua Reynolds deserves to be mentioned. Being present when some intimate friends were delivering their opinions on Sir Joshua's picture of Hercules strangling the serpents, painted for the Empress of Russia.—" Gentlemen, (said he) I have listened to all you have said; some observations are true, and some are nonsense, but no other man in Europe could paint such a picture."—A peculiar shyness of disposition kept him from all association with public bodies, and led to the pursuit of his studies in retirement and solitude, which at the same time, that it encouraged habits of great temperance, allowed him the more leisure for observation, reflection, and trying his skill in other arts, connected with his own. And indeed few artists, since the fifteenth century, have been able to do so much in so many different

branches; for besides his beautiful compositions and pictures, which have added to the knowledge and celebrity of the English school, he modelled like a sculptor, carved ornaments in wood with great delicacy, and could make an architectural design in a fine taste, as well as construct every part of the building. Although his shyness confined him to a few intimates, he was abundantly affectionate and gracious to them, of which the following instance shall speak for the rest. He was particularly delighted with youthful talents, and never neglected an opportunity of encouraging and recommending them. Once he endeavoured to press two hundred pounds on a young man going abroad to study, who was not in affluent circumstances, and on the money being refused, he exerted himself by recommendation and every means in his power, until he actually did render him much more important services.

To this liberal eulogy, from the pen of Flaxman, friendship seems to require, that I should add the following praise bestowed on the pictures of Romney by the person, who, of all his companions, may be said to have contemplated his works and his character through the greatest length of time, with increasing esteem and admiration.—"I am satisfied that whatever you may say of Romney, as a great artist, his works will justify in the fullest extent. If as an old artist myself, I may be permitted to judge the talents of so extraordinary a man, as our late beloved friend, I should not hesitate to say, that after his return from his studies abroad, he was not less qualified to excel in the highest walk of art, history, than for the profession of portraiture. In support of what I say, you have only to recollect his picture of Milton and his daughters, and its intended companion, Newton displaying the colours of the Prism; two compositions not surpassed in expression, colouring, and simplicity, by those celebrated pictures, the dead Christ of Annibal Caracci, the physician visiting his patient by Poussin, or that of Alexander the Great, confidently



Romney Pinx

Meadows Sculp.

Newton with the Prism.

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drinking the supposed draught of poison, in the presence of his physician, by Le Sœur. We have known from innumerable instances how fertile Romney was in point of invention, witness his history of Psyche, his Macbeth, his maid of Orleans, his two or three births of Shakespeare, his Prospero, &c. &c. with the infinite number of designs for pictures, which he intended to paint, and might have accomplished, had his valuable life been extended to a later period. Indeed for luxuriance of invention he may be classed with Rubens himself. There is one thing, that may still be added to his other excellencies. I mean the exceeding beauty of his draperies, both in his portraits and his historical compositions, which surpass every thing of the kind, that I have ever seen; they were all painted from models, and after he had finished adjusting them upon the layman, he always said he looked upon them as half done, so ready and certain was his execution, that it is but doing him common justice to say, that he stands unrivalled in this department of the art."

To the foregoing remarks on the productions of Romney from two more experienced judges of the pencil, I will only add, that to my apprehension his chief excellence consisted in strong and delicate delineations of character, however dignified or refined. He seemed to me most perfect in the powers of expression; his own extreme sensibility gave him in his happier hours, the rare talent of painting the countenance in such a manner, as to make it a true representative of the mind, and the heart. It has been justly observed of Romney, by more than one of his associates, that his habits of life were, (as Addison says true happiness is) "of a retired nature." Few men of any public profession, devote so many hours to solitary meditation. The only club, to which he belonged, was one of few members, who dined together once a fortnight, near Grays Inn; of this society the late well-informed, communicative and benevolent Isaac Reed, was perpetual president: to Romney it had the additional attraction of including two of his most intimate friends, Messrs. Long and Greene, which induced him to attend it with great regularity.

I must not yet cease to speak of him in his character of a companion; he never wished to be delineated without some strong shadows in the portrait; truth and affection equally oblige me to say, that in his fits of constitutional spleen he sometimes indulged such a degree of petulance, as might fill a sympathetic associate with serious concern, or with ludicrous surprise. I will give but one example of the foible I have mentioned: he happened one day to describe with some asperity, an absent acquaintance: "you are too severe, my dear Romney, (I exclaimed) you forget that the person you speak of, has many good qualities and a great deal of wit—"Wit! he replied, what is Wit? Wit is a cursed impudent thing, and I hate it." This brief and bitter invective against an object of his general admiration struck me in so comic a point of view, that it produced a hearty laugh, in which he joined in perfect good humour, and with reflections both comic, and serious, on his own irritability. If he was like Horace, prone to anger, he was like him also in a most endearing placability of temper, and ever ready to condemn himself for any hasty or

unguarded expression; our intimacy of almost thirty years was unclouded by a single serious quarrel. His letters abundantly testify the genuine benignity of his heart: I brave the hazard of being censured for vanity, in printing so many of them, because one of my favorite aims in this publication, as I have repeatedly declared, is to endear his memory to my readers by truly displaying both the quickness, and the tenderness of his feelings.

I am here induced to transcribe what Mr. Cumberland has said very happily of his conversation. —"When in company with his intimates * * * * * he would give vent to the effusions of his fancy, and harangue, in the most animated manner, upon the subject of his art, with a sublimity of idea, and a peculiarity of expressive language, that was entirely his own; and in which education or reading had no share. These sallies of natural genius clothed in natural eloquence, were perfectly original, very highly edifying, and entertaining in the extreme. They were uttered in a hurried accent, an elevated

tone, and very commonly accompanied by tears, to which he was by constitution prone."—This description of Romney is a portrait drawn from the life, with a delightful fidelity. I most heartily wish that Mr. Cumberland for his own honor, and our reciprocal gratification, had always spoken of our departed friend with the same graceful truth and propriety. That gentleman, if he ever peruses the present volume, will perceive, that I am not afraid to censure him in defending those, whom he has treated injuriously, yet ever willing to praise him, when he renders honorable justice to the object of our regard, whom each of us has presumed to commemorate. The terms in which Mr. Cumberland has recently spoken of Cowper's biographer, and of Cowper, in the Appendix to his own Memoirs, awaken pity, and not resentment, because they can be injurious only to himself.

It is yet incumbent on me to notice two early disciples of Romney, who both retain an affectionate veneration for his memory, and both do honor by their talents, to the abilities, and the kindness of their

master. The first, Mr. Rawlinson, of Derbyshire, is known to the public by an excellent portrait of Dr. Darwin, the poet, admirably engraved as a large print by Heath. The second, Mr. Robinson of Windermere, long settled in Ireland, under the patronage of the poetical and venerable Bishop of Dromore, has contributed to the improvement and decoration of this volume, in a manner peculiarly obliging, first by favoring me with anecdotes of the master, whom he revered, and secondly by an exquisite drawing now engraved as the final ornament of my book. His grateful remembrance of past instruction and kindness, induced him to christen a son by the name of Romney as the youth had displayed the most promising poetical talents at a very early age I requested him to write a poem to celebrate the kind instructor of his father, that poem, and the portrait of the young poet strewing flowers round an urn, inscribed to Romney, will be thought I trust an offering of respect peculiarly suited to the memory of an artist, whose tenderness of heart led him to delight in fostering and encouraging the ingenuity and the diligence of youth.

After this introduction I will transcribe the particulars relating to my friend, that I received from his pupil, and without changing the expressions of Mr. Robinson, as I cannot put them into any language more fit for publication, than his own.—" Count Steel (the master of Romney) was not so contemptible a painter, as one would suppose, from Mr. Cumberland's account. The giving him all the praise he deserved can detract nothing from our admirable artist, who often mentioned, that he drew with correctness: and described him to me, as '*a neat painter.*' He once shewed me his portrait by himself, which he said was as good as the portraits of Hudson. I have conversed with many people, that were intimately acquainted with Steel, who all described him as an '*ingenious*, inoffensive man;' and old Mr. Wright, the cabinet-maker, (with whom Mr. Romney worked for some time at Lancaster) related to me the liberal manner in which Steel relinquished his engagement, that 'he might not retard the progress of a mind, that, he was sure, would do wonders.' On my return to Winder-

mere, after leaving Mr. Romney, I had the curiosity to see some of Steel's pictures, which were freely painted in rather a broad manner; the drawing was correct, and in one of them was the best imitation of a lace cap and apron I remember to have seen.—The manner, in which Mr. Romney spent the day, when alone, during the time I remained in his house. He generally rose between seven and eight o'clock, and walked to Gray's Inn to breakfast; on his return, while his servant was dressing his hair, he was employed on some drawing, with which he amused himself till ten o'clock, the hour at which he always had a sitter appointed. His number of sitters was three, four, and sometimes five. At noon he took broth, or coffee, and dined at four, in the most simple manner; after dinner he walked into the country, and always had his sketch book, in which were new thoughts slightly marked, several different ways; on his return home, he had again recourse to his port-folio, and amused himself with the design, he had worked on in the morning, till twelve o'clock, when he retired to rest. This was his custom without any varia-

tion, except it rained, while I remained with him. Some of those sketches have great merit, and gave me, at that time, a greater idea of his genius, than even what he painted: he certainly had an idea of having some of them engraved. The cartoons in black chalk, on half length canvas, were all designed at night; and at one time he had an idea of painting in oil colours by candle-light, and was at considerable expence for reflectors; but it did not answer his expectation. Amusements he had none, but what related to his profession, or in the company of his particular friends. In his painting room he seemed to have the highest enjoyment of life, and the more he painted, the greater flow of spirits he acquired. His pencil was uncommonly rapid and to see him introduce the back ground into one of his large pictures, was something like enchantment. He was very anxious concerning the preparation of his colours; the arrangement of his flesh-palette was very curious and simple, and in some of his figures particularly in the arms, it is easy to trace the different

gradations of tints, as they stood on the palette. This may be observed in his most delicate flesh, particularly in the arms of a Bacchante, with a dog, sent to Sir William Hamilton, at Naples; in his Serena in the boat; in the left arm of Mr. Henderson, in the character of Macbeth: this last was the most finished of all his flesh colour, and he told me he could go no farther. At this period (1785) his pictures were highly glazed, and though they have more effect, want the delicacy of his former style, which may be found in the half whole length of Wortley Montague, and in Euphrosyne from Milton's Allegro: the foot of the last he thought nearer to nature than any thing he had ever painted. The head of Creon's daughter is less finished, than any other from the same lady; the child is very fine; the drapery was painted in an hour, from a living model, which manner he preferred whenever he could accomplish it. The Lions were by Gilpin, and the picture was purchased by Admiral Vernon. Perhaps the girl spinning is the best picture he painted at this period, he first caught the idea from observing a cobler's wife sitting in a

stall. Mr. Curwen told me he gave two hundred guineas for it. Saint Cecilia was the most laboured of all his pieces. His portrait of Lord Thurlow he esteemed as his best. The youngest son of Sir John Trevelyan studied under Mr. Romney for a short time, but died suddenly. Mr. Romney painted a number of portraits for this family. He began a whole length of Mrs. Siddons, and I once told him, the picture was greatly admired, and thought to be superior to that by Sir Joshua Reynolds; he said—' the people know nothing of the matter, for it is not.' He has been misrepresented by young artists, as a person, who would not lend any pictures, or give any instructions. This had no foundation in truth, for the fact was, that he was pleased with any request of this nature, but he was often applied to for pictures, that he could not lend ; yet he always offered some other, that, if the artist only wanted to improve himself, was more for his purpose."

To this account of Romney's professional diligence in the metropolis, I will subjoin a few parti-

culars relating to his similar diligence during his rural visits. What he said in one of his letters, that he came into the country not to play, but to work, was in general most literally true. In the time that he passed with me in the early years of our intimacy, when his muscular strength was entire, I was both astonished and enlivened by the chearful ardour, and persevereance of his application. I may truly say, that labour was his delight: his first object was to prevail on me to collect for him a copious variety of subjects for fancy-pictures, by hunting through many books of an extensive library. As soon as such a collection was a little advanced, he would begin a multitude of sketches on paper, and canvas. I recollect that on his return to London, one autumn, (I cannot remember the date of the year) he packed up more than twenty very promising beginnings of pictures in oil, not one of which did I ever see finished; one of these I have the pleasure of possessing, his first idea of the Fairy Queen, and her attendant, from Shakespeare, which he discovered in his chaos of embrio pictures, on clearing his London house. It was a misfortune to him,

that he had such an eagerness to accumulate an enormous stock of materials for future works, that he might have said in the quaint expression of Ovid:

"*His plenty made him poor.*"

And he fell at last, like a Titan overwhelmed by the mountainous fragments, that he had piled upon himself. In the country he generally employed every hour of the morning (when his health was unbroken) in drawing or painting, with no other relaxation, than about half an hour at noon, for a social cup of coffee. I had so much pleasure in promoting his works, and in contemplating their origin and progress, that when he was with me, I generally put aside my own particular studies for the sake of assisting him in the arrangement of his apparatus, or of reading to him, while he painted. He thought rather contemptuously of some applauded literary works relating to his own art, and particularly Fresnoy's Poem, translated into English prose by Dryden, and into rhyme by Mason. He said that in his early life the precepts of it, had perplexed and misled him exceedingly. He was par-

ticularly pleased by my reading to him, Italian books upon painting; the custom of reading these to him into English, soon made me able to do so without hesitation, except in the long and intricate sentences of Vasari's Lives of the Painters, whose anecdotes he delighted to hear. But of writers on art, in Italian, he was most gratified by the works of Mengs, as they are published by his friend Azara. Another favorite book with him was the Collection of Letters written by eminent Painters. I recollect that in reading a letter of Salvator Rosa, I said to him, "here Romney, here Salvator has drawn your portrait, as well as his own, in a single short sentence—*tutto spirito, tutto fuoco, tutto bile*—all spirit, all fire, all bile." In truth the imagination of my friend was his master and his tyrant. It was the source of his pleasures, his toils, and his troubles, especially of the latter, when it became infected with the common timidity of age and illness. Few mortals acquire that unworldly prudence very strongly recommended by the precepts, and the example of the great Sir Matthew Hale, which consists in preparing an active mind for very advanced

life, by beginning to educate the old man betimes. I use not the words of Sir Matthew, but those of an excellent old personage long since deceased, who in giving similar advice, to a younger friend, employed this very expressive phrase of "beginning to educate the old man betimes."

When we reflect, what powers of mind and what delicacy, force, and rapidity of pencil, were possessed, and displayed by Romney, what prosperity attended him and how much he hurt himself by an intemperance of labour, and a waste of application, from the want of deliberate forecast, and provident order in the regulation of his studies, we are inclined to regret, that he did not *accomplish more* for the extent and dignity of his professional renown, and for his own mental enjoyment in his evening of life. But if we look back to his juvenile days, if we contemplate the unformed artist sallying forth from obscurity in the north, with an adventurous temerity of spirit, and with a frame, though of great muscular strength, yet frequently subject to a

constitutional tremor of nerves; if we behold this enterprising yet modest young man plunging into a world full of infinite perils, of which he knew nothing; if we consider that without education, without patronage, and without money, he raised himself, by the mere force of talents and industry, to intellectual eminence, to professional distinction, to affluence and fame, that he was for many years a favorite of the public, in the most refined and enlightened city of the world, and that when he felt himself utterly exhausted by labour, he retired to lay his bones in the land of his fathers, and to acquire in that land a very comfortable estate for the sake of leaving it to a son, whom he had educated as a gentleman, and a divine, when we thus consider the whole course and result of his activity, we may repeat the strong though familiar expression, which his generous master used prophetically in releasing his young apprentice from his indentures, and we may truly say with admiration both of his mind and his heart, "they really *did wonders.*"

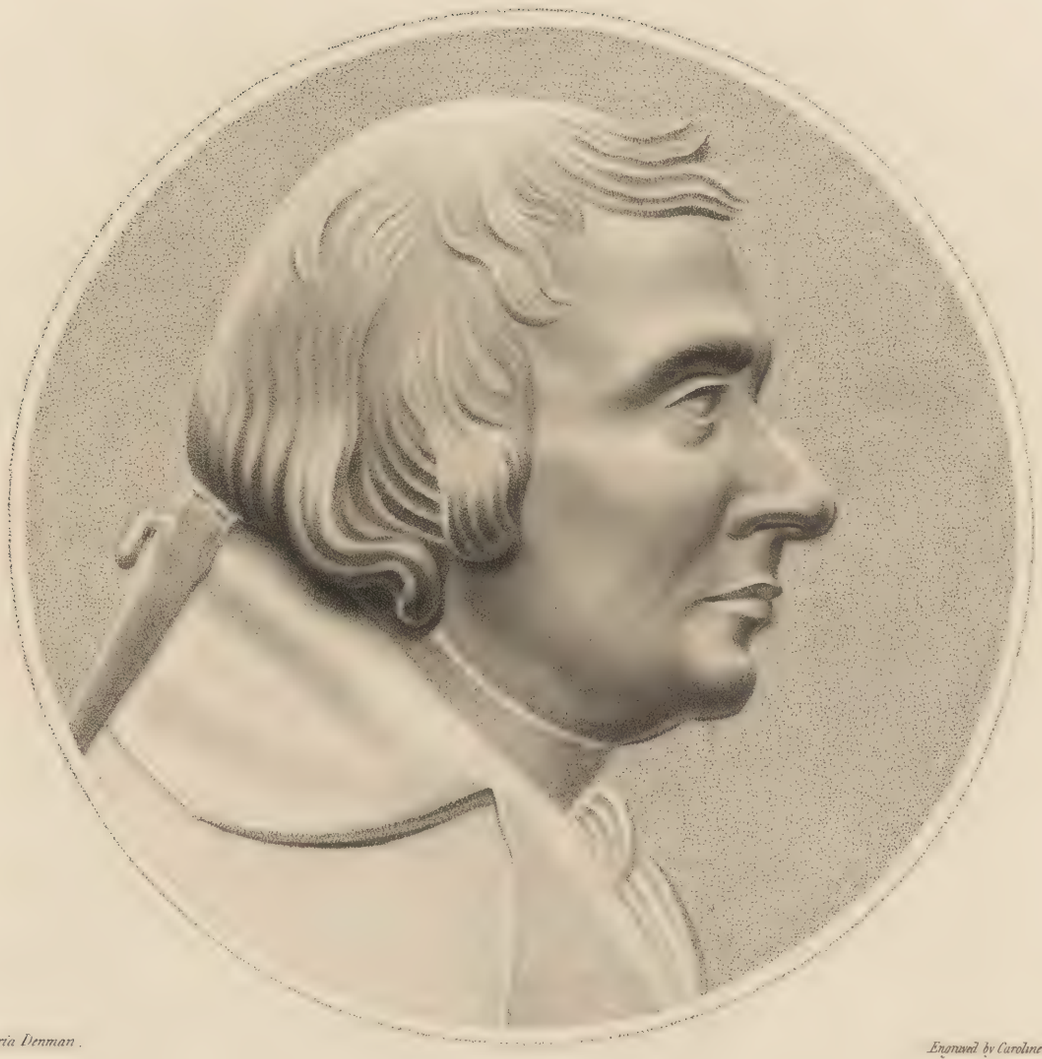
In my long attachment to Romney I have felt some-

thing like the very powerful charm, that attaches a reader of feeling to the Hamlet of Shakespeare. I had high admiration and esteem for the rare endowments of my friend, united to great pity for his melancholy excesses of sensibility, and for all the singularities of nature, and of habit, that seemed to preclude him from accomplishing many great objects of his continual contemplation and desire. From our perfect intimacy, I derive at this moment, that pleasing renovation and enjoyment of past life, which arises from the tender recollection of innumerable hours employed in sweet social study, or in unreserved, confidential, and sympathetic discourse: I can hardly look into any apartment of my house, without being reminded most agreeably, that I have many reasons to love his memory and to feel encreasing esteem for the professional monuments of his regard. Happy, if I succeed in my great wish to endear his name to my reader by this often interrupted, yet faithful record of his Life, which I now hasten to close, with a brief poetical summary of his character, composed when my heart was full of affec-

tionate emotion from the first tidings of his recent decease, and eager to express my cordial sense of his merits in the form of an

EPITAPH.

What off'rings, Romney! to thy grave are due?
Verse like thy pencil exquisitely true:
Thou on lost friends could'st such a life bestow,
That all their virtues on thy canvas glow.
When mental health allow'd thy heart to feel,
Truth's tranquil charm, and friendship's fervent zeal,
Both blest thy presence in their social rites,
Thou peerless partner in their prime delights!
And both, thus faithful to thy honor'd dust,
Hail thee with cordial praise devoutly just.
Pity, kind angel! on thy tomb reclines,
Declares no earthly monument enshrines
A heart, whose fibres were more quick to pay
Humane obedience to her heavenly sway,
And to the Saviour God, on mercy's throne,
Leads thy freed spirit, tender as her own.



Drawn by Maria Denman.

Engraved by Caroline Watson Engraver to Her Majesty.

A Portrait of Romney from a Medallion by Thomas Hayley.

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APPENDIX.

ADVERTISEMENT BY THE EDITOR.

When I requested the very young author of the following Elegy, to join me in these offerings to the departed, he was only a child of rare poetical faculties, and I imagined his occasional composition might prove the means of introducing him advantageously to the favour of the public, but from the various circumstances, that have inevitably delayed from year to year the appearance of this volume, the poet has so far anticipated the wish of the biographer, that he has already made himself honorably known to the world by a little volume of Poems, repeatedly printed. He has also most creditably obtained a scholarship in the college of Dublin, and I have only to hope, that his future progress in literature and science, in reputation and prosperity, may be most suitable to the very singular and splendid promises of his juvenile days, in which his exertions have been so various, so laudable, and so happily rewarded, that I may chearfully address to my young friend, the following words of a Latin poet:

Vade puer, tantisque enixus suffice donis.
——Vade alacer majoraque disce mereri!



Hab^t Cooper Sculp^t

A Portrait of a Romney Robinson.

Published April 1st 1794 by Thomas Vivare, Pall Mall

AN ELEGY

ON THE

DEATH OF GEORGE ROMNEY, Esq.

BY J. ROMNEY ROBINSON,

AGED TEN YEARS AND EIGHT MONTHS.

As oft a vapour blots the morning beam,
Or as the primrose droops beneath the storm,
The joys of life are but a transient dream,
And pain and sickness oft its charms deform.

E'en he,* who late rejoic'd in Percy's bow'rs,
Weeps at the memory of his earliest friend,
Who strew'd his path with art's unfading flow'rs,
And bade instruction on his steps attend.

* The Author's Father (formerly a pupil of Mr. Romney,) who had been hospitably invited to spend some time at Dromore House, for the recovery of his health: Dr. Percy, the present Bishop of Dromore, has displayed great taste in the improvements that surround his elegant Mansion. When he came first into possession of the See, his Lordship found the demesne lands in a naked rude uncultivated state, his predecessors having always resided in another part of the Diocese: but it now exhibits a charming variety of wood, lawn, and water scenery, with a succession of beautiful cascades, &c. &c. In one of his groves he has placed a fine column of the Giant's causeway, and in his museum are many rare and valuable curiosities.

Come then ye pow'rs, to whom the lawn belongs,
At yonder tomb your flow'ry tribute pay;
And ye Aonian nymphs, who guide my song,
Inspire to Romney's name the sorrowing lay.

No more when rosy light adorns the sky,
He views the beauty of the rural glade,
Where blushing nature mark'd his raptur'd eye,
As oft he woo'd her in the lonely shade.

She mark'd his soul with heav'nly ardour glow,
And bade the wilds of fancy all unfold;
She bade the Graces guide with magic flow
His forming pencil, ting'd with Titian's gold.

She bade the spring select her softest bloom,
And fling a lively verdure all around,
She bade the groves a mellower tint assume
And autumn's yellow ruins strew the ground.

For him the whirlwind swept the angry main,
Whose waves impetuous hurl'd the bark on high,
Where sportive Ariel with his fleeting train
Spread the dark tempest* thro' the lowering sky.

* Alluding to his celebrated picture on the subject of Shakespeare's Tempest for Mr. Boydell as the following Stanzas were suggested by other productions of his pencil.

Alecto whirl'd her flaming torch around
Midst red-wing'd pestilence she mov'd along;
Or in th' infernal cavern's dark profound,
Before Macbeth the grisly spectres throng.

His skill divine dispell'd oblivion's gloom,
Preserv'd the image of the long-lost friend,
Bade smiling youth defy the yawning tomb,
And lent to memory all, that art can lend.

He drew the hoary chief with wisdom crown'd,
Whose nerveless arm resigns the war-worn shield;
Maternal fondness view'd her infants round,
As Flora first beheld the blooming field.

Pure as etherial flame his colours shine,
When wond'ring Newton scans the solar rays;
Reflected light, in many a hue divine,
Around the sage with heav'nly lustre plays.*

On beauty's cheek his glowing pencil shone,
With living fire illum'd the sparkling eye;
As when the sun assumes his radiant throne,
And orient blushes tinge the azure sky.

* Alluding to his picture of Sir Isaac Newton with the Prism.

And as the modest flower adorns the wild,
Dispensing fragrance to the morning dew,
Thus o'er his youth benignant genius smil'd,
And on his canvas endless glory threw.

And while his mind the powers of art inspire,
His generous heart each nobler passion led,
The zeal of friendship wak'd each latent fire,
Glow'd in his eye and all its influence shed.

For as in gold the sparkling diamond gleams,
He shone amidst the joys, fair science brings,
Who chear'd each busy hour with brightest beams,
And scatter'd blessings from her balmy wings.

But not the tints of light's resplendent ray,
Nor friendship's power, nor fame's resounding breath,
Could turn heaven's fiat from it's destin'd way,
Borne on the fleeting minutes wing'd with death.

Oft shall the muse resume her youthful lyre,
And oft in plaintive strains deplore his doom,
Where ruthless time invades yon mould'ring spire,
And PAINTING bends in sorrow o'er his tomb.

Belfast, December, 1803.

EPISTLES TO ROMNEY,

FIRST

PRINTED IN THE YEAR,

1788.

Συγγενειαν τινα προς ποιητικήν εχειν η τεχνη εὑρισκεται, και κοινη τις αμφοιν ειναι Φαντασια,

———ἀ λεγειν ὁι ποιηται εχουσι ταυτα εν τω γραμματι σημαινουσα.

PHILOSTRATUS.

Patet omnibus Ars, nondum est occupata, multum ex illâ etiam futuris relictum est.

SENEC. Epist. 33.

EPISTLE THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT.

Introduction; the flourishing state of art in this country; disadvantage attending the modern painter of portraits; short encomium on this branch of art, with the account of its origin in the story of the Maid of Corinth; superiority of historical painting: some account of the Greeks, who excelled in it: its destruction and revival in Italy; short account of the most eminent Italian and Spanish painters; those of Flanders and France; the corruption of art among the latter.

BLEST be the hour, when fav'ring gales restore
The travell'd artist to his native shore!
His mind enlighten'd, and his fancy fraught
With finest forms by ancient genius wrought;
Whose magic beauty charm'd, with spell sublime,
The scythe of ruin from the hand of time,
And mov'd the mighty leveller to spare
Models of grace so exquisitely fair.
While you, whom painting thus inspir'd to roam,
Bring these rich stores of ripen'd judgment home;

While now, attending my accomplish'd friend,
Science and taste his soften'd colours blend;
Let the fond muse, tho' with a transient view,
The progress of her sister art pursue;
Eager in tracing from remotest time
The steps of painting through each favor'd clime,
To praise her dearest sons, whose daring aim
Gain'd their bright station on the heights of fame,
And mark the paths, by which her partial hand,
Conducts her Romney to this radiant band.
Painting, sweet nymph! now leaves in lifeless trance
Exhausted Italy, and tinsel France,
And sees in Britain, with exulting eyes,
Her vot'ries prosper, and her glories rise.
Yet tho', my friend, thy art is thus carest,
With public homage eminently blest,
And flourishes with growing beauty fair,
The child of Majesty's adoptive care,
The youthful artist still is doom'd to feel
Obstruction's chilling hand, that damps his zeal:
Th' imperious voice of vanity and pride
Bids him from fancy's region turn aside,
And quit the magic of her scene, to trace
The vacant lines of some unmeaning face:
E'en in this work his wishes still are crost,
And all the efforts of his art are lost;

For when the canvas, with the mirror's truth,
Reflects the perfect form of age or youth,
The fond affections of the partial mind
The eye of judgment with delusion blind:
Each mother bids him brighter tints employ,
And give more spirit to her booby boy;
Nor can the painter, with his utmost art,
Express the image in the lover's heart:
Unconscious of the change, the seasons bring,
Autumnal beauty asks the rose of spring,
And vain self-love, in every age the same,
Will fondly urge some visionary claim.
The luckless painter, destin'd to submit,
Mourns the lost likeness, which he once had hit,
And, doom'd to groundless censure, bears alone
The grievous load of errors not his own.
Nor is it pride, or folly's vain command,
That only fetters his creative hand;
At fashion's nod he copies as they pass
Each quaint reflection from her crowded glass.
The formal coat, with intersecting line,
Mars the free graces of his fair design;
The towering cap he marks with like distress,
And all the motley mass of female dress.
The hoop extended with enormous size,
The corks, that like a promontory rise;

The stays of deadly steel, in whose embrace
The tyrant fashion tortures injur'd grace.
But art, despairing over shapes like these
To cast an air of elegance, and ease,
Invokes kind fancy's aid; she comes to spread
Her magic spells; the gothic forms are fled;
And see to crown the painter's just desire,
Her free positions, and her light attire!
Th' ambitious artist wishes to pursue
This brilliant plan with more extensive view,
And with adopted character to give
A lasting charm to make the portrait live;
All points of art by one nice effort gain,
Delight the learned, and content the vain;
Make history to life new value lend,*
And in the comprehensive picture blend
The antient hero with the living friend.
Most fair device! "but, ah! what foes to sense,
What broods of motley monsters rise from hence!"
The strange pretensions of each age and sex
These plans of fancy and of taste, perplex;
For male and female, to themselves unknown,
Demand a character unlike their own,
Till oft the painter in this quaint distress
Prefers the awkward shapes of common dress.

Verse 77.——Note 1.

Sweet girls, of mild and pensive softness, choose
The sportive emblems of the comic muse;
And sprightly damsels are inclin'd to borrow
The garb of penitence, and tears of sorrow:
While awkward pride, tho' safe from wars alarms,
Round his plump body buckles ancient arms,
And, from an honest justice of the peace,
Starts up at once a demi-god of Greece;
Too firm of heart by ridicule to fall,
The finished hero crowns his country hall,
Ordain'd to fill, if fire his glory spare,
The lumber-garret of his wiser heir.
Not less absurd to flatter Nero's eyes*
Arose the portrait of colossal size:
Twice fifty feet th' enormous sheet was spread,
To lift o'er gazing slaves the monster's head,
When impious folly sway'd oppression's rod,
And servile Rome ador'd the mimic God.
Think not, my friend, with supercilious air,
I rank the portrait as beneath thy care.
Blest be the pencil, which from death can save†
The semblance of the virtuous, wise, and brave;
That youth and emulation still may gaze
On those inspiring forms of ancient days,
And, from the force of bright example bold,
Rival their worth, "and be what they behold."

* Verse 100. Note 2.——† Verse 108. Note 3.

Blest be the pencil! whose consoling pow'r,
Soothing soft friendship in her pensive hour,
Dispels the cloud, with melancholy fraught,
That absence throws upon her tender thought.
Blest be the pencil! whose enchantment gives
To wouuded love the food, on which he lives.
Rich in this gift, tho' cruel ocean bear
The youth to exile from his faithful fair,
He in fond dreams hangs o'er her glowing cheek,
Still owns her present, and still hears her speak:
Oh! Love, it was thy glory to impart
Its infant being to this magic art!
Inspir'd by thee, the soft Corinthian maid*
Her graceful lover's sleeping form pourtray'd:
Her boding heart his near departure knew,
Yet long'd to keep his image in her view:
Pleased she beheld the steady shadow fall,
By the clear lamp upon the even wall:
The line she trac'd with fond precision true,
And, drawing, doated on the form she drew;
Nor, as she glow'd with no forbidden fire,
Conceal'd the simple picture from her sire:
His kindred fancy still to nature just,
Copied her line, and form'd the mimic bust.
Thus from thy power, inspiring love, we trace
The modell'd image, and the pencil'd face!

* Verse 126.——Note 4.

How weak seems genius, when, by interest led,
His toils but reach the semblance of a head;
Yet are those censures too severe and vain,
That scorn the portrait as the painter's bane.
Tho' up the mountain winds the arduous road
That leads to pure perfection's bright abode.
In humbler walks some tempting laurels grow,
Some flowers are gather'd in the vale below:
Youth on the plain collects increasing force,
To climb the steep in his meridian course.
While nature sees her living models share
The rising artist's unremitting care,
She on his mind her every charm imprints,
Her easy postures, and her perfect tints,
Till his quick pencil, in maturer hour,
Becomes her rival in creative power.

Yet in these paths disdain a long delay,
While eager genius points a nobler way:
For see! expanding to thy raptur'd gaze,
The epic field a brighter scene displays!
Here stands the temple, where, to merit true,
Fame gives her laurel to the favor'd few:
Whose minds, illumin'd with cœlestial fire,
Direct the pencil, or awake the lyre;
Who trace the springs of nature to their source,
And by her guidance, with resistless force,

The tides of terror and of transport roll,
Thro' every channel of the human soul!
How few, my friend, tho' millions boast the aim,
Leave in this temple an unclouded name!
Vain the attempt, in every age and clime,
Without the slow conductors, toil and time;
Without that secret, soul-impelling power,
Infus'd by genius in the natal hour;
And vain with these, if bright occasion's ray
Fail to illuminate the doubtful way.
The elders of thy art, ordain'd to stand
In the first circle of this honor'd band,
(Whose pencil striving for the noblest praise,
The heart to soften, and the mind to raise,
Gave life and manners to the finish'd piece)
These sons of glory were the sons of Greece!
Hail! throne of genius, hail! what mighty hand
Form'd the bright offspring of this famous land?
First in the annals of the world they shine:
Such gifts, O Liberty, are only thine;
Thy vital fires, thro' kindling spirits run,
Thou soul of life, thou intellectual sun;
Thy rays call forth, profuse and unconfin'd,
The richest produce of the human mind.
First taught by thee, the Grecian pencil wrought
The forceful lessons of exalted thought,

And generously gave, at glory's call,
The patriot picture to the public hall.
'Twas then Panæus drew, with freedom's train,*
The chief of Marathon's immortal plain,
In glorious triumph o'er the mighty host,
That Persia pour'd in torrents on their coast.
There Polygnotus scorning servile hire,†
Display'd the embattled scene from Homer's lyre.
His country view'd the gift with fond regard,
And rank'd the painter with their noblest bard.
Thy tragic pencil, Aristides, caught‡
Each varied feeling, and each tender thought;
While moral virtue sanctified thy art,
And passion gave it empire o'er the heart,
Correct Parrhasius first to rich design§
Gave nice proportion, and the melting line,
Whose soft extremes from observation fly,
And with ideal distance cheat the eye.
The gay, the warm, licentious Zeuxis drew‖
Voluptuous beauty in her richest hue:
Bade in one form her scatter'd rays unite,
And charm'd the view with their collected light.
But grace consign'd, while her fair works he plann'd,
Her softest pencil to Apelles' hand:
Yet oft to gain sublimer heights he strove,¶
Such strong expression mark'd his mimic Jove,

* Verse 194——Note 5. † Verse 198——Note 6. ‡ Verse 202——Note 7.
§ Verse 206——Note 8. ‖ Verse 210——Note 9. ¶ Verse 216——Note 10.

Inimitably great he seem'd to tower,
And pass the limits of the pencil's power.
Ye sons of art, tho' on the gulph of years
No floating relict of your toil appears,
Yet glory shews, in every cultur'd clime,
Your names still radiant thro' the clouds of time.
Thy pride, O Rome! inclin'd thee to abhor
Each work that call'd thee from thy sphere of war:
By freedom train'd, and favor'd by the nine,
The powers of eloquence and verse were thine,
While chilling damps upon the pencil hung,*
Where Tully thunder'd, and where Virgil sung,
Yet Grecian artists had the splendid fate
To triumph o'er the Romans' scornful hate.
Their matchless works profusion toil'd to buy,
Their wonders glitter'd in the public eye,
Till Rome's terrific pomp, and letter'd pride,
Were sunk in desolation's whelming tide.
Oh! lovely painting! long thy cheering light
Was lost and buried in barbaric night;
The furious rage of Anarchy effac'd
Each hallow'd character, thy hand had trac'd,
And ign'rance mutt'ring in her monkish cell,
Bound thy free soul in her lethargic spell.
At length from this long trance thy spirit rose,
In that sweet vale where silver Arno flows;

* Verse 228.——Note 9.

There studious Vinci treasur'd every rule,*
To form the basis of a rising school:
Like early Hesiod, 'twas his fate to shine,
The herald of a master more divine.
Inflam'd by Genius with sublimest rage,
By toil unwearied, and unchill'd by age,
In the fine frenzy of exalted thought
Gigantic Angelo his wonders wrought;†
And high, by native strength of spirit rais'd,
The mighty Homer of the pencil blaz'd.
Taste, fancy, judgment, all on Raphael smil'd.‡
Of grandeur and of grace the darling child:
Truth, passion, character, his constant aim,
Both in the human and the heavenly frame,
Th' enchanting painter rules the willing heart,
And shines the finished Virgil of his art.
The daring Julio, tho' by Raphael train'd,§
Reach'd not the summit, where his master reign'd;
Yet to no common heights of epic fame
True genius guided his adventurous aim.
Thus Statius, fraught with emulous regard,
Caught not the spirit of the Mantuan bard:
Tho' rival ardour his ambition fir'd,
And kindred talents his bold verse inspir'd.
More richly warm, the glowing Titian knew‖
To blend with nature's truth the living hue:

* Verse 244——Note 12. † Verse 251——Note 13. ‡ Verse 254——Note 14.
§ Verse 260——Note 15. ‖ Verse 268——Note 16.

O! had sublime design his colours crown'd!
Then had the world a finish'd painter found:
With powers to seize the highest branch of art,
He fix'd too fondly on a humbler part;
Yet this low object of his partial care
Grew from his toil so exquisitely fair,
That dazzled judgment, with suspended voice,
Fears to condemn the error of his choice.
Thus pleas'd a flowry valley to explore,
Whence never poet cull'd a wreath before,*
Lucretius chose the epic crown to lose
For the bright chaplets of an humbler muse.
Soft as Catullus, sweet Corregio play'd†
With all the magic charms of light and shade.
Tho' Parma claim it for her rival son,‡
The praise of sweetest grace thy pencil won:
Unhappy genius! tho' of skill divine,
Unjust neglect and penury were thine.
Lamenting o'er thy labours unrepaid,
Afflicted art opprest with wrongs decay'd,
Till the Caracci in a happier hour§
Raising to energy her injur'd power,
Reclaim'd the pencil of misguided youth
From affectation's glare to tints of modest truth.

* Unde prius nulli velarunt Tempora Musæ.
Lucretius, Lib. iv. Ver. 5.

† Verse 282——Note 17. ‡ Verse 284——Note 18. § Verse 290—— Note 19.

They form'd the pencil, to whose infant fame
Young Zampieri ow'd his nobler name:*
Profoundly skill'd his figures to dispose,
The learned Lanfranc in their school arose,†
And, train'd to glory, by their forming care,
The tender Guido caught his graceful air.‡
Nor shall ye fail your well-earned praise to gain,
Ye! who adorn'd with art your native Spain!
The unfrequented shore, that gave you birth,
Tempts not the faithful muse to hide your worth:
Just to all regions, let her voice proclaim
Titian's mute scholar, rival of his fame.§
The power, that nature to his lips denied,
Indulgent art, with fonder care, supplied:
The cruel bar his happy genius broke;
Tho' dumb the painter, all his pictures spoke.
And thou, Velasquez, share the honor due‖
To forceful tints, that fascinate the view!
Thy bold illusive talents soar'd so high,
They mock'd, with mimic life, the cheated eye.
Thou liberal artist! 'twas thy praise to guide
Thy happy scholar with parental pride;
Thy care the soft, the rich Murillo form'd,¶
And as thy precept taught, thy friendship warm'd.
Yet other names, and not a scanty band!
Have added lustre to th' Iberian land;

* Verse 295——Note 20. † Verse 297——Note 21. ‡ Verse 299——Note 22.
§ Verse 305——Note 23. ‖ Verse 310——Note 24. ¶ Verse 316——Note 25.

But, generous Italy, thy genial earth
Superior numbers bore of splendid worth!
And rais'd amidst them, in thy golden days
No mean historian to record their praise.*
On thee, whom art, thy patroness and pride,
Taught both the pencil and the pen to guide;
Whose generous zeal and modest truth have known
To blazon others' skill, not boast thy own;
On thee, Vasari, let my verse bestow
That just applause, so freely seen to flow
From thy ingenuous heart and liberal hand,
To each great artist of thy native land!
Tho' many shine in thy elaborate page,
And more have risen since thy distant age,
Their various talents, and their different fame
The muse, unskilful, must decline to name,
Least in the nice attempt her judgment fail
To poise their merits in precision's scale.
E'en public taste, by no determin'd rule,
Has class'd the merit of each nobler school:
To Rome and Florence, in expression strong,
The highest honors of design belong;
On her pure style see mild Bologna claim †
Her fairest right to secondary fame;
Tho' prouder Venice would usurp that praise,
Upon the splendid force of Titian's golden rays.‡

* Verse 323——Note 26. † Verse 342——Note 27. ‡ Verse 345——Note 28.

But ill they know the value of their art,
Who flattering the eye, neglect the art.
Tho' matchless tints a lasting name secure,
Tho' strong the magic of the clear-obscure,
These must submit, as a dependant part,
To pure Design, the very soul of art,
Or fame, misguided, must invert her course,
And Raphael's grace must yield to Rembrandt's force;*
Fancy's bold thought to labour's patient touch,
And Rome's exalted genius to the Dutch.
Yet Holland, thy unwearied labours raise †
A perfect title to peculiar praise:
Thy hum'rous pencil shuns the epic field,
The blazing falchion, and the sanguine shield;
But strongly marks the group of rural mirth,
In social circle round the chearful hearth;
And rustic joy, from busy cares releas'd,
To the gay gambols of the village feast:
While nature smiles her very faults to view,
Trac'd with a skill so exquisitely true.
These faults, O Rembrandt, 'twas thy praise to hide!
New pow'rs of art thy fertile mind supplied;
With dazzling force thy gorgeous colouring glows,
And o'er each scene an air of grandeur throws:
The meanest figures dignity assume,
From thy contrasted light, and magic gloom.

*Verse 353——Note 29. † Verse 356——Note 30.

These strong illusions are supremely thine,
And laugh at imitation's vague design;
So near to blemishes thy beauties run,
Those who affect thy splendor are undone:
While thy rash rivals, loose and incorrect,
Miscall their shadowy want of truth *effect*,
And into paths of affectation start:
Neglect of nature is the bane of art.
Proud of the praise by Rubens' pencil won,*
Let Flanders boast her bold inventive son!
Whose glowing hues magnificently shine
With warmth congenial to his rich design:
And him, her second pride, whose milder care
From living beauty caught its loveliest air!
Who truth of character with grace combin'd,
And in the speaking feature mark'd the mind,
Her soft Vandyke, while graceful portraits please,†
Shall reign the model of unrivall'd ease.
Painting shall tell, with many a grateful thought,
From Flanders first the secret power she caught,‡
To grace and guard the offspring of her toil,
With all the virtues of enduring oil;
Tho' charm'd by Italy's alluring views,
(Where sumptuous Leo courted every muse,§
And lovely science grew the public care)
She fix'd the glories of her empire there;

* Verse 380——Note 31. † Verse 388——Note 32. ‡ Verse 391.——Note 33.
§ Verse 395——Note 34

There in her zenith soon she ceas'd to shine,
And dated, passing her meridian line,
From the Caracci's death her period of decline.
Yet in her gloomy and disgraceful hour
Of faded beauty, and enfeebled power,
With talents flowing in free nature's course,
With just exertion of unborrow'd force,
Untrodden paths of art Salvator tried,*
And daring fancy was his favorite guide.
O'er his wild rocks, at her command, he throws
A savage grandeur, and sublime repose;
Or gives th' historic scene a charm as strong
As the terrific gloom of Dante's song.
His bold ideas, unrefin'd by taste,
Express'd with vigour, tho' conceiv'd in haste,
Before slow judgment their defects can find,
With awful pleasure fill the passive mind.
Nor could one art, with various beauty fraught,
Engross the ardor of his active thought:
His pencil pausing, with satiric fire
He struck the chords of the congenial lyre;
By generous verse attempting to reclaim
The meaner artist from each abject aim.
But vain his satire! his example vain!
Degraded painting sinks with many a stain:

* Verse 405——Note 35.

Her clouded beams from Italy withdrawn,
On colder France with transient lustre dawn.
There, in the arms of Roman science nurs'd,
In every work of ancient genius vers'd,
The sage Poussin, with purest fancy fraught,*
Portray'd the classic scene, as learning taught:
But nature, jealous of her sacred right,
And piqued that his idolatry should slight
Her glowing graces, and her living air,
To worship marble with a fonder care,
Denied his pencil, in its mimic strife,
The bloom of beauty, and the warmth of life,
Then rose Le Brun, his scholar, and his friend,†
More justly skill'd the vivid tints to blend;
Tho' with exalted spirit he present
The generous victor in the suppliant tent,
Too oft the genius of his gaudy clime
Misled his pencil from the pure sublime.
Thy dawn, Le Sueur, announc'd a happier taste,‡
With fancy glowing, and with judgment chaste:
But art, who gloried in thy rising bloom,
Shed fruitless tears upon thy early tomb.
These lights withdrawn, confusion and misrule
Seize the vain pencil of the gallic school:
Tho' Fresnoy teaches, in Horatian song,§
The laws and limits, that to art belong;

* Verse 427——Note 36. † Verse 435——Note 37. ‡ Verse 441——Note 38.
§ Verse 447.——Note 39.

n vain he strives, with attic judgment chaste,
To crush the monsters of corrupted taste:
With ineffectual fire the poet sings,
Prolific still the wounded Hydra springs:
Gods roll'd on gods encumber every hall,
And saints, convulsive, o'er the chapel sprawl.
Bombast is grandeur, affectation grace,
Beauty's soft smile is turn'd to pert grimace;
Loaded with dress, supremely fine advance
Old Homer's heroes, with the airs of France.
Indignant art disclaim'd the motley crew.
Resign'd their empire, and to Britain flew.

END OF THE FIRST EPISTLE.

EPISTLE THE SECOND.

ARGUMENT.

The rise of painting in England, and the reasons for its happening so late. The rapidity of its improvement. A slight sketch of the most eminent living artists in England. The author's wish to see his friend among the first of that number. His reasons for hoping it. The reputation of a painter in some degree owing to a happy choice of subjects. A few recommended from national events, and from Milton and Shakespeare. Conclusion, author's wishes for his friend's success.

INGENUOUS Romney, whom thy merits raise
To the pure summits of unclouded praise;
Whom art has chosen, with successful hand,
To spread her empire o'er this honor'd land;
Thy progress friendship with delight surveys,
And this pure homage to thy goddess pays.
Hail! heavenly visitant! whose cheering powers
E'en to the happy give still happier hours!
O! next to freedom, and the muse design'd
To raise, ennoble, and adorn mankind!

At length we view thee in this favor'd isle,
That greets thy presence, and deserves thy smile:
This favor'd isle, in native freedom bold,
And rich in spirit, as thy Greeks of old.
Tho' foreign theorists, with system blind,*
Prescribe false limits to the British mind,
And, warp'd by vanity, presume to hold
Our northern genius dark, confin'd, and cold:
Painting, sweet nymph, unconscious of their chain,
In this fair island forms her new domain,
And freely gives to Britain's eager view
Those charms, which once her fav'rite Athens knew.
'Tis true, when painting, on Italia's shore,
Display'd those graces, which all realms adore,
No kindred forms of English growth appear;
Age after age the hapless pencil here
Dropt unsuccessful from the native's hand,
And fail'd to decorate this darker land.
But freely let impartial history say,
Why art on Britain shone with later ray.
When on this isle, the gothic clouds withdrawn,
The distant light of painting seem'd to dawn.
Fierce Harry reign'd, who, soon with pleasure cloy'd,†
Now lov'd, now scorn'd, now worship'd, now destroy'd.
Thee as his wives, enchanting art! he priz'd,
Now sought to crown thee, now thy death devis'd:

* Verse 15.——Note 40. † Verse 33.——Note 41.

Now strove to fix, with liberal support,
Thy darling Raphael in his sumptuous court;
Now o'er the hallow'd shrines, thy hand had grac'd,
"Cried havock and let slip the dogs of waste."
When timid art saw ruin his delight,
She fled in terror from the tyrant's sight.

The virgin queen, whom dazzled eyes admire,
The subtle child of this imperious sire,
Untaught the moral force of art to feel,*
Proscrib'd it as the slave of bigot zeal;
Or doom'd it, throwing nobler works aside,
To drudge in flattering her fantastic pride;
And hence the epic pencil in the shade
Of blank neglect and cold obstruction laid,
E'en while the fairy-sprite, and muse of fire,
Hung high in glory's hall the English lyre.

James, both for empire and for arts unfit,
(His sense a quibble, and a pun his wit)
Whatever works he patroniz'd debas'd,
But haply left the pencil undisgrac'd.

With fairer mind arose his nobler son,
Seduc'd by parasites, by priests undone:
Unhappy Charles! oh! had thy feeling heart
But honor'd freedom as it valued art!
To merit just, thy bounty flow'd alike
On bolder Rubens, and the soft Vandyke:

* Verse 45.——Note 42.

To this ennobled realm thy judgment brought
The sacred miracles, that Raphael wrought;
But regal pride with vain ambition blind,
Cut off the promise of thy cultur'd mind.
By wounded liberty's convulsive hand
Unbound, fierce Anarchy usurps the land;
While trembling art to foreign regions flies,
To seek a refuge in serener skies.

These storms subsiding, see her once again
Returning in the second Charles's train!
She comes to copy, in licentious sport,
The minions of a loose luxurious court;
From which the modest graces turn their eyes,
Where genius sees, and o'er the prospect sighs,
Lely's soft tints, and Dryden's nobler lyre,
Made the mean slaves of dissolute desire.

Once more, alarm'd by war's terrific roar,
The sweet enchantress quits the troubled shore;
While sacred freedom, darting in disdain
Her vengeful thunder on th' apostate train,
And, pleas'd the gloomy tyrant to disown,
Gives to Nassau the abdicated throne.

The peaceful prince may rising art defend,
And art shall crown her patron and her friend.
In tumults, from the cradle to the grave,
'Tis thine, O William! sinking realms to save.

To thee no leisure mightier cares allow,
To bind the laurel on the artist's brow:
Tis thine to fix, with tutelary hand,
The base of freedom, on which art must stand.
Yet to thy palace Kneller's skill supplied*
Its richest ornament in beauty's pride.
Unhappy Kneller! covetuous though vain;
Thee glory yielded to seducing gain:
While partial taste from modest Riley turn'd,†
By diffidence depriv'd of praise well earn'd.
Tho' in succeeding years the muses taught,
'How Ann commanded and how Marlbro' fought;"
And Thornhill's blaze of allegory gilt‡
The piles, that Wren's superior genius built;
Contending factions, in her closing reign,
Like winds imprison'd, shook fair freedoms fane.
Painting, soft timid nymph, still chose to roam,
And fear'd to settle in this shaking dome.
At length, the fury of each storm o'erblown,
That threaten'd Brunswick's race on Britain's throne,
Rebellion vanquish'd on her native shore,
Her clans extinguish'd, and her chiefs no more:
The youthful noble, on a princely plan,§
Encourag'd infant art, and first began
Before the studious eye of youth to place
The antient models of ideal grace.

* Verse 93——Note 43. † Verse 97——Note 44. ‡ Verse 101.——Note 45.
§ Verse 111——Note 46

When Britain triumph'd thro' her wide domain
O'er France supported by imperious Spain,
And, sated with her laurels' large increase,
Began to cultivate the plants of peace;
Fixt by kind Majesty's protecting hand,
Painting, no more an alien in our land,
First smil'd to see, on this propitious ground,
Her temples open'd, and her altars crown'd:
And grace, the first attendant of her train,
She, whom Apelles wooed, nor wooed in vain,
To Reynolds gives her undulating line,
And judgment doats upon his chaste design.
Tho' envy whispers in the ear of spleen,
What thoughts are borrow'd in his perfect scene,
With glee she marks them on her canker'd scroll,
Malicious fiend! 'twas thus that Virgil stole,
To the bright image gave a brighter gloss,
Or turn'd to purest gold the foreign dross.
Excelling artist! long delight the eye!
Teach but thy transient tints no more to fly,*
Britain shall then her own Apelles see,
And all the Grecian shall revive in thee.
Thy manly spirit glories to impart
The leading principles of lib'ral art;†
To youthful genius points what course to run,
What lights to follow, and what rocks to shun:

* Verse 134——Note 47. † Verse 138——Note 48.

So Orpheus taught, by learning's heavenly sway.
To daring Argonauts their doubtful way,
And mark'd to guide them in their bold career,
Th' unerring glories of the starry sphere.
Thy hand enforces what thy precept taught,
And gives new lessons of exalted thought;
Thy nervous pencil on the canvas throws
The tragic story of sublimest woes:
The wretched sons, whom grief and famine tear,
The parent petrified with blank despair,
Thy Ugolino gives the heart to thrill,*
With pity's tender throbs, and horror's icy chill.
The offspring now of many a rival hand,
Sublimity and grace adorn the land;
Tho' but some few years past, this barren coast
Scarce one fair grain of native art could boast.
Of various form where'er we turn our eyes,
With strong and rapid growth new wonders rise;
Like seeds that mariners, with generous toil,
Have wisely carried to some kindred soil,
Which, shooting quick and vig'rous in their birth,
Speak the fond bounty of the virgin earth:
The land o'erjoy'd a fairer fruit to see
Adopts, with glad surprize, the alien tree.
Now art exults, with annual triumphs gay,†
And Britain glories in her rich display;

* Verse 151——Note 49. † Verse 165——Note 50.

Merit, who unassisted, and unknown,
Late o'er his unseen labours sigh'd alone,
Sees honor now his happier toils attend,
And in the generous public finds a friend.
O lovely painting, to whose charms I bow,
" And breathe my willing verse with suppliant vow,"
Forgive me, if by undiscerning praise,
Or groundless censure, which false judgment sways,
My failing line with faint resemblance wrong
Thy sons, the subject of no envious song!
Supremely skill'd the varied group to place,
And range the crowded scene with easy grace;
To finish parts, yet not impair the whole,
But on the impassion'd action fix the soul;
Through wondering throngs the patriot chief to guide,
The shame of Carthage, as of Rome the pride;
Or, while the bleeding victor yields his breath,
Give the bright lesson of heroic death.
Such are thy merits West: by virtue's hand
Built on the human heart thy praise shall stand,
While dear to glory in her guardian fane,
The names of Regulus and Wolfe remain.
With kindred power a rival hand succeeds,
For whose just fame expiring Chatham pleads;
Like Chatham s language, luminous and bold,
Thy colours, Copley, the dread scene unfold,

Where that prime spirit, by whose guidance hurl'd,
Britain's avenging thunder aw'd the world,
In patriot cares employ'd his parting breath,
Struck in his field of civic fame by death;
And freedom, happy in the tribute paid
By art and genius to so dear a shade,
Shall own, the measure of thy praise to fill,
The awful subject equall'd by thy skill.
To Dance's pencil, in precision strong,
Transcendent force, and truth of line belong.
Not Garrick's self, to Shakespeare's spirit true,
Display'd that spirit clearer to our view,
Than Dance expresses, in its fiercest flame,
The poet's genius in the actor's frame.
From Garrick's features, with distraction fraught,
He copies every trace of troubled thought;
And paints, while back the waves of battle roll,
The storm of sanguinary Richard's soul.
The rapid Mortimer, of spirit wild,
Imagination's dear and daring child,
Marks the fierce ruffian, in the dungeon's gloom,
Stung with remorse, and shudd'ring at his doom.
Yet still to nobler heights his genius springs,
And paints a lesson to tyrannic kings:
In his bright colours, see the field appear
To freedom sacred, and to glory dear,

Where John, proud monarch, baffled on his throne,
Hears the brave chief his lawless pow'r disown,
And, for an injur'd nation, nobly claim
The glorious CHARTER of immortal fame!
But see far off the modest Wright retire!
Alone he rules his element of fire:
Like meteors darting thro' the gloom of night,
His sparkles flash upon the dazzled sight;
Our eyes with momentary anguish smart,
And nature trembles at the power of art.
May thy bold colours, claiming endless praise,
For ages shine with undiminish'd blaze,
And when the fierce Vesuvio burns no more,
May his red deluge down thy canvas pour!
Art with no common gifts her Gainsb'rough grac'd,
Two different pencils in his hand she plac'd;
This shall command, she said, with certain aim,
A perfect semblance of the human frame;
This, lightly sporting on the village-green,
Paint the wild beauties of the rural scene.
In storms sublime the daring Wilson soars,
And on the blasted oak his mimic lightning pours:
Apollo triumphs in his flaming skies,
And classic beauties in his scenes arise.
Thy graces, Humphrey, and thy colours clear,
From miniature's small circle disappear:

May their distinguish'd merit still prevail,
And shine with lustre on the larger scale.
Let candid justice our attention lead
To the soft crayon of the graceful Read:*
Nor, Gard'ner, shall the muse, in haste, forget
Thy taste and ease: tho' with a fond regret
She pays, while here the crayon's pow'r she notes,
A sigh of homage to the shade of Coates.
Nor, if her favor'd hand may hope to shed
The flowers of glory o'er the skilful dead,
Thy talents, Hogarth! will she leave unsung;†
Charm of all eyes, and theme of every tongue!
A separate province 'twas thy praise to rule;
Self-form'd thy pencil! yet thy works a school;
Where strongly painted, in gradations nice,
The pomp of folly, and the shame of vice,
Reach'd thro' the laughing eye the mended mind,
And moral humour sportive art refin'd,
While fleeting manners, as minutely shewn
As the clear prospect on the mirror thrown;
While truth of character, exactly hit,
And drest in all the dyes of comic wit;
While these, in Fielding's page, delight supply,
So long thy pencil with his pen shall vie.
Science with grief beheld thy drooping age
Fall the sad victim of a poet's rage:

* Verse 248.——Note 51. † Verse 255.——Note 52.

But wit's vindictive spleen, that mocks controul,
Nature's high tax on luxury of soul!
This, both in bards and painters, fame forgives;
Their frailty's buried, but their genius lives.
Still many a painter, not of humble name,
Appears the tribute of applause to claim;
Some alien artists, more of English race,
With fair Angelica our foreign grace,
Who paints, with energy and softness join'd
The fond emotions of the female mind;
And Cipriani, whom the loves surround,
And sportive nymphs in beauty's cestus bound:
For him those nymphs their every charm display,
For him coy Venus throws her veil away;
And Zaffani, whose faithful colours give
The transient glories of the stage to live;
On his bright canvas each dramatic muse
A perfect copy of her scene reviews;
Each while those scenes her lost delight restore,
Almost forgets her Garrick is no more.
O'er these I pass reluctant, lest too long
The muse diffusely spin a tedious song.
Yet one short pause, ye pow'rs of verse allow
To cull a myrtle leaf for Meyer's brow!
Tho' small its field, thy pencil may presume
To ask a wreath, where flowers immortal bloom.

As nature's self, in all her pictures fair,
Colours her insect works with nicest care,
Nor better forms, to please the curious eye,
The spotted leopard than the gilded fly;
So thy fine pencil, in its narrow space,
Pours the full portion of uninjur'd grace,
And portraits, true to nature's larger line,
Boast not an air more exquisite than thine.
Soft beauty's charms thy happiest works express,
Beauty thy model and thy patroness.
For her thy care has to perfection brought
The uncertain toil, with anxious trouble fraught;
Thy colour'd crystal, at her fond desire,
Draws deathless lustre, from the dang'rous fire,
And, pleas'd to gaze on its immortal charm,
She binds thy bracelet on her snowy arm.
  While admiration views, with raptur'd eye,
These lights of art, that gild the British sky;
Oh! may my friend arise with lustre clear,
And add new glory to this radiant sphere.
This wish, my Romney, from the purest source,
Has reason's warrant, join'd to friendship's force,
For genius breath'd into thy infant frame
The vital spirit of his sacred flame,
Which transient mists of diffidence o'ercloud,
Proving the vigor of the sun, they shroud.

Nature in thee her every gift combin'd,
Which forms the artist of the noblest kind;
That fond ambition, which bestows on art
Each talent of the mind, and passion of the heart;
That dauntless patience, which all toil defies,
Nor feels the labour, while it views the prize.
Enlight'ning study, with maturing pow'r,
From these fair seeds has call'd the op'ning flow'r;
Thy just, thy graceful portraits charm the view,
With every tender tint, that Titian knew.
Round fancy's circle when thy pencil flies,
With what terrific pomp thy spectres rise!
What lust of mischief marks thy witch's form,
While on the Lapland rock she swells the storm!
Tho' led by fancy thro' her boundless reign,
Well dost thou know to quit her wild domain,
When history bids thee paint, severely chaste,
Her simpler scene, with uncorrupted taste.
While in these fields thy judging eyes explore,
What spot untried may yield its secret ore,
Thy happy genius springs a virgin mine
Of copious, pure, original Design;
Truth gives it value, and, distinctly bold,
The stamp of character compleats thy gold.
Thy figures rise in beauty's noblest scale,
Sublimely telling their heroic tale.

Still may thy powers in full exertion blaze,
And time revere them with unrivall'd praise!
May art, in honor of a son like thee,
So justly daring, with a soul so free,
Each separate province to thy care commend,
And all her glories in thy pencil blend!
May tender Titian's mellow softness join
With mighty Angelo's sublimer line;
Corregio's grace with Raphael's taste unite,
And in thy perfect works inchant the ravish'd sight!
How oft we find, that when, with noblest aim,
The glowing artist gains the heights of fame,
To the well-chosen theme he chiefly owes,
That praise, which judgment with delight bestows!
The lyre and pencil both this truth confess,
The happy subject forms their full success.
Hard is the painter's fate, when wisely taught
To trace with ease the deepest lines of thought,
By hapless fortune he is doom'd to rove
Thro' all the frolics of licentious Jove,
That some dark Philip, phlegmatic and cold,*
(Whose needy Titian calls for ill-paid gold)
May with voluptuous images enflame
The sated passions of his languid frame;
Abuse like this awakens generous pain,
And just derision mingles with disdain,

* Verse 369——Note 53.

When such a pencil, in a Roman hand,
While the rich abbess issues her command,
Makes wild St. Francis on the canvas sprawl,
That some warm nun in mimic trance may fall,
Or, fondly gazing on the pious whim,
Feel saintly love o'erload each lazy limb,
Mistaking, in the cloister's dull embrace,
The cry of nature for the call of grace.

But see th' historic muse before thee stand,
Her nobler subjects court thy happier hand!
Her forms of reverend age and graceful youth,
Of public virtue, and of private truth,
The sacred power of injur'd beauty's charms,
And freedom fierce, in adamantine arms;
Whence sympathy, thro' thy assisting art,
With floods of joy may fill the human heart.

But while the bounds of hist'ry you explore,
And bring new treasures from her farthest shore,
Thro' all her various fields, tho' large and wide,
Still make simplicity thy constant guide!
And most, my friend, a syren's wiles beware,
Ah! shun insidious Allegory's snare!
Her flattery offers an alluring wreath,
Fair to the eye, but poisons lurk beneath,
By which, too lightly tempted from his guard,
Full many a painter dies, and many a bard.

How sweet her voice, how dangerous her spell,
Let Spencer's Knights, and Ruben's Tritons tell;
Judgment at colour'd riddles shakes his head,
And fairy songs are prais'd, but little read;
Where, in the maze of her unbounded sphere,
Unbridled fancy runs her wild career.

In realms where superstition's tyrant sway
" Takes half the vigor of the soul away,"
Let art for subjects the dark legend search,
Where saints unnumber'd people every church;
Let painters run the wilds of Ovid o'er,
To hunt for monsters, which we heed no more.
But here, my Romney, where, on freedom's wings,
The towering spirit to perfection springs;
Where genius, proud to act as heav'n inspires,
On taste's pure altar lights his sacred fires;
Oh! here let painting, as of old in Greece,
With patriot passions warm the finish'd piece;
Let Britain, happy in a gen'rous race,
Of manly spirit, and of female grace;
Let this frank parent with fond eyes explore
Some just memorials of the line, she bore,
In tints immortal to her view recall
Her dearest offspring on the storied wall!

But some there are, who, with pedantic scorn,
Despise the hero, if in Britain born:

For them perfection has herself no charms,
Without a Roman robe, or Grecian arms;
Our slighted country, for whose fame they feel
No generous interest, no manly zeal,
Sees public judgment their false taste arraign,
And treat their cold contempt with due disdain;
To the fair annals of our isle we trust,
To prove this patriot indignation just,
And, nobly partial to our native earth,
Bid English pencils honor English worth.*
Shall Bayard, glorious in his dying hour,
Of Gallic chivalry the finest flow'r,
Shall his pure blood in British colours flow,
And Britain, on her canvas, fail to shew
Her wounded Sidney, Bayard's perfect peer,†
Sidney, her knight, without reproach or fear,
O'er whose pale corse heroic worth should bend,
And mild humanity embalm her friend!
Oh! Romney, in his hour of death we find
A subject worthy of thy feeling mind:
Methinks I see thy rapid hand display
The field of Zutphen, on that fatal day,
When arm'd for freedom, 'gainst the guilt of Spain,
The hero bled upon the Belgic plain?
In that great moment thou hast caught the chief,
When pitying friends supply the wish'd relief;

* Verse 436.——Note 54. † Verse 441.——Note 55.

While sickness, pain and thirst his pow'r subdue,
I see the draught he pants for in his view:
Near him the soldier, who in anguish lies,
This precious water views with ghastly eyes,
With eyes, that from their sockets seem to burst,
With eager, frantic, agonizing thirst:
I see the hero give, oh! generous care!
The cup untasted to this silent pray'r;
I hear him say, with tenderness divine,
"Thy strong necessity surpasses mine."
Shall Roman charity for ever share
Thro' every various school each painter's care
And Britain still her bright examples hide
Of female glory, and of filial pride?
Instruct our eyes, my Romney, to adore
Th' heroic daughter of the virtuous More,*
Resolv'd to save, or in th' attempt expire,
The precious relicts of her martyr'd sire:
Before the cruel council let her stand,
Press the dear ghastly head with pitying hand,
And plead while bigotry itself grows mild,
The sacred duties of a grateful child.
Forgive the muse, if haply she commend
A theme ill-chosen to her skilful friend;
She, tho' its pow'r commands her willing heart,
Knows not the limits of thy lovely art,

* Verse 468——Note 56.

Yet boldly owns an eager wish to see
Her darling images adorn'd by thee.
Nor shall her social Love in silence hide
The just emotions of her grateful pride,
When thy quick pencil pours upon her sight
Her own creation in a fairer light;
When her Serena learns from thee to live,
And please by every charm, that life can give.
Thou hast imparted to th' ideal fair,
Yet more than beauty's bloom, and youth's attractive air;
For in thy studious nymph th' enamour'd eye
May thro' her breast, her gentle heart descry;
See the fond thoughts, that o'er her fancy roll,
And sympathy's soft swell, that fills her soul.
But happier bards, who boast a higher claim,
Ask from thy genius an increase of fame.
Oh! let the sisters, who with friendly aid,
The Grecian Lyre, and Grecian pencil sway'd,
Who join'd their rival powers with fond delight,
To grace each other with reflected light,
Let them in Britain thus united reign,
And double lustre from that union gain!
Not that my verse, adventurous, would pretend,
To point each varied subject to my friend;
Far nobler guides their better aid supply:
When mighty Shakespeare to thy judging eye

Presents that magic glass, whose ample round,
Reflects each figure in creation's bound,
And pours, in floods of supernatural light,
Fancy's bright beings on the charmed sight.
This chief inchanter of the willing breast,
Will teach thee all the magic he possest;
Plac'd in his circle, mark in colours true
Each brilliant being, that he calls to view:
Wrapt in the gloomy storm, or rob'd in light,
His weird sister, or his fairy sprite,
Boldly o'erleaping, in the great design,
The bounds of nature, with a guide divine.
Let Milton's self, conductor of thy way,
Lead thy congenial spirit to portray
In colours, like his verse, sublimely strong,
The scenes, that blaze in his immortal song.
See Michael drawn, by many a skilful hand
As suits the leader of the seraph-band!
But oh! how poor the prostrate Satan lies,*
With bestial form debas'd and goatish eyes!
How chang'd from him, who leads the dire debate,
Fearless tho' fallen, and in ruin great!
Let thy bold pencil, more sublimely true,
Present this arch-apostate to our view
In worthier semblance of infernal pow'r,
And proudly standing like a stately tow'r,

* Verse 523——Note 57.

While his infernal mandate bids awake
His legions, slumbering on the burning lake.
Or paint him falling from the realms of bliss,
Hurl'd in combustion to the deep abyss!
In light terrific let the flash display
His pride, still proof against almighty sway:
Tho' vanquish'd, yet immortal, let his eye
The lightning's flame, the thunder's bolt defy,
And still, with looks of execration, dare
To face the horrors of the last despair.
To these great Lords of fancy's wide domain,
That o'er the human soul unquestion'd reign,
To their superior guidance be consign'd
Thy rival pencil, and congenial mind.
Yet O! let friendship, ere the verse she close,
Which in just tribute to thy merit flows,
The sanguine wishes of her heart express,
With fond presages of thy full success.
May health and joy, in happiest union join'd
Breathe their warm spirit o'er thy fruitful mind!
To noblest efforts raise thy glowing heart,
And string thy sinews to the toils of art,
May independence, bursting fashion's chain,
To eager genius give the flowing rein,
And o'er thy epic canvas smile to see
Thy judgment active, and thy fancy free!

May thy just country, while thy bold design
Recalls the heroes of her ancient line,
Gaze on the martial group with dear delight!
May youth and valour, kindling at the sight,
O'er the bright tints with admiration lean,
And catch new virtue from the moral scene!
May time himself a fond reluctance feel,
Nor from thy aged hand the pencil steal,
But grant it still to gain increasing praise,
In the late period of thy lengthen'd days,
While fairest Fortune thy long life endears,
With Raphael's glory join'd to Titian's years!

END OF THE SECOND EPISTLE.

NOTES TO THE FIRST EPISTLE.

NOTE 1.——*VERSE* 77.

Make history to life new value lend.—One of the most elegant writers of the present age has made an ingenious effort to introduce history into the dull province of portrait-painting, " by representing a whole family in a single picture, under some interesting historical subject suitable to their rank and character." See Fitzosborne's Letters, p. 6. But as the beauties and advantages of this plan struck forcibly on the imagination of this amiable author, the infinite difficulties attending its execution were likewise fully open to his discernment. The success must depend on the choice of subject, where that is not very happily adapted, the picture will probably contain some most ridiculous absurdities. Perhaps the reader may recollect an unfortunate instance or two of this kind.

NOTE 2.——*VERSE* 100.

Not less absurd to flatter Nero's eyes.—Pliny furnishes us with this singular anecdote, as an instance of the extravagant abuse of portrait-painting in his days, which, as he informs us, had arrived to a degree of madness. " Nero had ordered himself to be painted under the figure of a Colossus, upon cloth or canvas, a hundred and twenty feet in height." The same author informs us, that this preposterous picture, when it was finished, met with its fate from lightning, which consumed it, and involved likewise the most beautiful part of the gardens, where it was placed in the conflagration. The reader may find some ingenious remarks upon this subject, in the Notes sur l'Histoire de la Peinture Ancienne, extraite de l'Histoire Naturelle de Pline. Fol. London, 1725.

NOTE 3.——*VERSE* 108.

Blest be the pencil which from death can save.—The sweet illusion of this enchanting art is prettily expressed in a letter of Raphael's to his friend Francesco Raifolini, a Bolognese painter. The two artists had agreed to exchange their own portraits, and Raphael on receiving his friend's picture, addresses him in the following words: " Messer Francesco mio caro ricevo in questo punto il vostro ritratto——egli è bellissimo, e tanto vivo, che m' inganno talora, credendomi di essere con esso voi, e sentire le vostre parole." Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, &c. Tom. 1, Page 82.——The charm of portrait painting is still more beautifully described in verse by a friend of Raphael's, the amiable and accomplished Count Balthasar Castiglione.

Sola tuos Vultus referens Raphaelis imago
Picta manu, curas allevat usque meas:
Huic ego delicias facio, arrisuque jocoque
Alloquor, et tanquam reddere verba queat

Assensu, nutuque mihi sæpe illa videtur
Dicere velle aliquid, et tua verba loqui,
Agnoscit, balboque Patrem puer ore salutat,
Hoc solor, longos decipioque dies.

These elegant lines are part of an epistle, written in the name of his Countess, Hyppolyte, to her husband. See Pope's edition of the Poemata Italorum, vol. 2. page 248.

NOTE 4.——*VERSE* 126.

Inspir'd by thee, the soft Corinthian maid.—Pliny has transmitted to us the history of the maid of Corinth and her father. " Dibutades, a potter of Sicyon, first formed likenesses in clay at Corinth, but was indebted to his daughter for the invention; the girl being in love with a young man who was soon going from her into some remote country, traced out the lines of his face from his shadow upon the wall by candle-light. Her father, filling up the lines with clay, formed a bust, and hardened it in the fire with the rest of his earthen ware." Plin. Lib. 35.——Athenagoras, the Athenian philosopher,

gives a similar account of this curious and entertaining anecdote, adding the circumstance that the youth was sleeping when the likeness was taken from his shadow. Περιεγραψεν αυτε κοιμωμενε εν τοιχφ την σκιαν.——The same writer, who lived in the second century of the Christian æra, informs us, that this monument of ancient art was extant at Corinth in his time, though Pliny seems to intimate that it did not survive the taking of that city by Mummius. In the Poesies de Fontenelle there is an epistle from the maid of Corinth, whom the author calls Dibutadis, to her imaginary lover Polemon. She describes her own work in the following stanzas:

Une lampe pretoit une lumiere sombre
Qui m'aidoit encore à rever:
Je voyois sur un mur se depeindre ton ombre,
Et m'appliquois à l'observer:

Car toutplait, Polemon, pour peu qu'il represente
L'objet de notre attachement.
C'est assez pour flatter les langueurs d'une amante
Que l'ombre seule d'un amant.

Mais je poussai plus loin cette douce chimere,
Je voulus fixer en ces lieux,
Attacher à ce mur une ombre passagere
Pour la conserver à mes yeux.

Alors en la suivant du bout d'une baguette
Je trace une image de toi;
Une image, il est vrai, peu distincte, imparfaite,
Mais enfin charmante pour moi.

NOTE 5.——*VERSE* 194.

'Twas then Panæus drew, with freedom's train.—Panæus was the brother of Phidias, the celebrated sculptor, whom he is said to have assisted in his noblest works. Paúsanias, in his Fifth Book, gives an account of several pictures by this early artist, and particularly of the picture here alluded to. It was painted

in the celebrated portico called Ποικιλη, Pœcile. Besides a general representation of the conflict, the flight of the barbarians, and a distant view of their ships, Theseus, Minerva, and Hercules were, according to this author, exhibited in the piece. The most conspicuous figures among the persons engaged were Callimachus, and Miltiades, and a hero called Echetlus: he mentions also another hero, who is introdcced into the picture, called Marathon, from whom, he says, the field had its name. Pausanias, fol. 1696, p. 37.—From Pliny's account of the same picture we learn that the heads of the generals were portraits: "adeo jam colorum usus percrebuerat, adeoque ars perfecta erat ut in eo Prælio ICONICOS duces pinxisse tradatur. Plin. lib. 35. c. 8.——Miltiades had the honor of being placed foremost in this illustrious group, as a reward for his having saved Athens and all Greece. Cor. Nep. in Vitâ Miltiadis.——Panæus flourished, according to Pliny, in the 83d. Olympiad, little more than forty years after the battle he painted.

NOTE 6.——VERSE 198,

There Polygnotus, scorning servile hire.—Of the talents of Polygnotus much honorable mention is made by many of the best authors of antiquity, as Aristotle and Plutarch, Dionysius Halicarnassensis, &c. Pausanias speaks of the pictures here alluded to, and in his tenth book introduces a very long description of other pictures by the same artist, painted also from Homer, in the temple at Delphos. The passage however gives but a confused and imperfect idea of the painter's performance. How much the art is indebted to this antient master, what grace and softness he gave to the human countenance, what embellishments he added to the female figure and dress, are much more happily described by Pliny: "Primus Mulieres lucidâ veste pinxit, capita earum mitris versicoloribus operuit, plurimumque picturæ primus contulit: siquidem instituit os adaperire, dentes ostendere, vultum ab antiquo rigore variare." The same author likewise bears honorable testimony to the liberal spirit of this great artist, who refused any reward for his ingenious labours in the portico: "Porticum gratuito, cum partem ejus Mycon mercede pingeret." Plin. lib. 35. cap. 8. He flourished about the 90th Olympiad.

NOTE 7.——*VERSE* 202.

Thy tragic pencil, Aristides, caught.—The city of Thebes had the honor of giving birth to this celebrated artist. He was the first, according to Pliny, who expressed character and passion, the human mind, and its several emotions; but he was not remarkable for softness of colouring, "His most celebrated picture was of an infant (on the taking of a town) at the mother's breast, who is wounded and expiring. The sensations of the mother were clearly marked, and her fear lest the child upon failure of the milk should suck her blood." "Alexander the Great," continues the same author, "took this picture with him to Pella." It is highly probable, according to the conjecture of Junius, (in his learned Treatise de Picturâ Veterum) that the following beautiful Epigram of Æmilianus was written on this exquisite picture.

Ελκε, ταλαν, παρα μητρος ον ουκ ετι μαζον αμελξεις
Ελκυσον ὑγαλιον ναμα καὶα φθιμενης.
Η δη γαρ ξιφεεσσι λιποπνοος· αλλα τα μητρος
Φιλτρα καί ειν αιδη παιδοκομειν εμαθον.

It is not ill translated into Latin by Grotius:

Suge, miser, nunquam quæ posthac pocula suges;
Ultima ab exanimo corpore poc'la trahe!
Expiravit enim jam saucia; sed vel ab orco
Infantem novit pascere matris amor.

But this is far inferior, and so perhaps is the original itself, to the very elegant English version of it, which Mr. Webb has given us in his ingenious and animated Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting.

Suck, little wretch, while yet thy mother lives,
Suck the last drop her fainting bosom gives!
She dies: her tenderness survives her breath,
And her fond love is provident in death.

Webb, Dialogue vii. p. 161

NOTE 8.——*VERSE* 206.

Correct Parrhasius first to rich design.—The name of Parrhasius is im-

mortalized by many of the most celebrated ancient authors; and his peculiar talents are thus recorded in Pliny: Primus symetriam picturæ dedit, primus argutias vultus, elegantiam capilli, venustatem oris: confessione artificum in lineis extremis palmam adeptus. He is one of the four ancient painters, whose lives are written by Carlo Dati. This ingenuous Italian very justly questions the truth of the singular story concerning Parrhasius, preserved in Seneca, where he is accused of purchasing an old Olynthian captive, and exposing him to a most wretched death, that he might paint from his agony the tortures of Prometheus. The same author contradicts on this occasion a similar falsehood concerning the great Michael Angelo, which was first circulated from the pulpit by an ignorant priest, as we learn from Gori's Historical Annotations to the Life of M. Angelo, by his scholar Condivi.

NOTE 9—VERSE 210.

The gay, the warm, licentious Zeuxis drew—The Helen of Zeuxis is become almost proverbial: the story of the artist's having executed the picture from an assemblage of the most beautiful females is mentioned (though with some variation as to the place) by authors of great credit, Pliny, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Cicero. The last gives a very long and circumstantial account of it. De Inventione, Lib. 2. If the story is true, it is perhaps one of the strongest examples we can find of that enthusiastic passion for the fine arts, which animated the ancients. Notwithstanding her præeminence in beauty, it seems somewhat singular that the painter should have chosen such a character as Helen, as a proper decoration for the temple of Juno. A most celebrated Spanish poet, though not in other respects famous for his judgment, has, I think, not injudiciously metamorposed this Helen of Zeuxis into Juno herself:

Zeusis, pintor famoso, retratando
De Juno el rostro, las faciones bellas
De cinco perfettissimas donzellas,
Estuvo attentamente contemplando.

Rimas de Lope de Vega. Lisboa, 1605. p. 51-2.

Junius supposes this picture to have been rated a little too high.

NOTE 10——*VERSE* 216.

Yet oft to gain sublimer heights he strove.—Grace is the well known excellence of Apelles, but that he sometimes very happily attempted the sublime we learn both from Plutarch and Pliny, who speak of his force and energy. The Alexander of Philip, says Plutarch, was invincible, the Alexander of Apelles inimitable. He painted, says Pliny, things that surpass the power of painting, quæ pingi non possunt, Tonitrua, fulgura fulgetraque.

NOTE 11——*VERSE* 228.

While chilling damps upon the pencil hung.—That the Romans attained to no degree of excellence in painting or sculpture, seems to be confest and accounted for in the following passage of Tully's Tusculan Disputations, Lib. 1. An censemus, si Fabio, nobilissimo homini, laudi datum esset quod pingeret, non multos etiam apud nos futuros Polycletos, et Parrhasios fuisse? honos alit artes, omnesque incenduntur ad Studia Gloriâ, jacentque ea semper, quæ apud quosque improbantur. The fine arts necessarily languish without public protection or encouragement; but public honors at Rome flowed in a very different channel. While the Roman boasted his consummate skill in every art of empire and government, he avowed, in many works of genius and taste his inferiority with an air of triumph.

Excudent alii spirantia mollius æra,
Credo equidem vivos ducent de marmore vultus:
Orabunt causas melius, cælique meatus
Describent radio, et surgentia Sidera dicent.
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hæ tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem:
Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.

Æneidos. Lib. 6.

NOTE 12——*VERSE* 244.

There studious Vinci treasured every rule.—Lionardo da Vinci was born near Florence in 1445. He was perhaps a man as universally accomplished as ever existed. Not only admirable beyond his predecessors in his own pro-

fession of painting, but an excellent architect and musician, and of great skill as an anatomist. Besides all these talents, he was, according to Vasari, the best extempore rimer of his time.—His history and works are well known.—The singular circumstance of his dying in the arms of Francis the first, king of France is mentioned by a French poet of the present age,

> Lorsque Francois premier, roi digne d' etre heureux,
> Tint Leonard mourant dans ses bras genereux.

And the particulars of his death are thus curiously recorded by Vasari, who speaks in raptures of his various and exalted talents.

Finalmente venuto vecchio, stette molti mesi ammalato, et vedendosi vicino alla morte, si volse diligentement e informare de le cose catoliche, e della via buona, et santa religione christiana, et poi con molti pianti confesso e contrito, se bene e' non poteva reggersi in piedi, sostenendosi nelle braccie di suoi amici, e servi, volse divotamente pigliare il santissimo sacramento, fuor del letto: sopragiunseli il rè che spesso amorevolmente le soleva visitare: per il che egli per riverenza rizzatosi a sedere sul letto, contando il mal suo e gli accidenti di quello mostrava tuttavia quanto aveva offeso dio, et gli huomini del mondo, non avendo operato nel arte come si conveniva: onde gli venne un parosismo messagiero della morte. Per la qual cosa rizzatosi il rè, et presola la testa per aiutarlo, e porgerli Favore, accio che il male lo allegerisse; lo spirito suo, che divinissimo era, conoscendo non potere havere maggiore honore, spirò in bracciò a quell ré nella eta sua d'anni 75. Vasari Vita di Lionardo da Vinci, p. 10, 11.

NOTE 13:....*VERSE* 251.

Gigantic Angelo his wonders wrought.—Michael Angelo Buonarroti was born near Florence 1474, and died at Rome 1563. This illustrious man is now advantageously known to our country by the very interesting volume of his excellent English biographer, Mr. Duppa, in which Michael Angelo engages admiration and esteem as a painter, a sculptor, an architect, and a poet. His *Rime* were first printed by the Giunti, at Florence, in quarto, in 1623. The following Sonnet, which, is to be found in Vasari, to whom it is addressed, is at once a proof of his poetical talents, and his religious turn of mind: it may serve also

as a lesson to vanity, in shewing that even a genius of the sublimest class entertained great apprehension concerning the mortality of his fame.

Giunto é giá 'l corso della vita mia,
Con tempestoso mar per fragil barca,
Al comun porto, ov' á render si varca
Conto e ragion d' ogni opra trista, e pia.

Onde l' affettuosa fantasia
Che l' arte mi fece idolo e monarca,
Cognosco hor ben quant 'era d'error carca
E quel ch' a mal suo grado ognun desia.

Gli amorosi pensier, gia vani, e lieti
Che fien or' s'a due morti mi avicino ?
D'una son certo, e l' altra mi minaccia.
Ne pinger ne scolpir sia piu che queti
L'anima volta a quell' amor divino
Ch' aperse a prender noi in croce le braccia.

A letter, addressed to his friend Vasari, on the death of Urbino, his old and faithful servant, shews that he united the soft virtues of a most benevolent heart, to the sublime talents of an elevated mind. This letter is printed both in Vasari, and in the first volume of Raccolta de Lettere sulla Pittura, &c. p. 6.

NOTE 14——*VERSE* 254.

Taste, fancy, judgment, all on Raphael smil'd.—Raffaello da Urbino was born in 1483, and died in 1520. His amiable and endearing qualities as a man were not inferior to his exalted talents as an artist. The reader will not be displeased to see the singular eulogium which the honest Vasari has bestowed on the engaging manners of this most celebrated genius. Certo fra le sue doti singulari ne scorgo una di tal valore che in me stesso stupisco ; che il cielo gli diede forza di poter mostrare nell' arte nostra uno effetto si contrario alle complessioni di noi pittori : questo è che naturalmente gli artefici nostri, non dico soli i bassi, ma quelli che hanno umore d' esser grandi (come di questo umore

l'arte ne produce infiniti) lavorando nell' opere in compagnia di Raffaello, stavano uniti e di concordia tale che tutti i mali umori in veder lui s'amorzavano: e ogni vile e basso pensiero cadeva loro di mente. La quale unione mai non fu piu in altro tempo che nel suo. E questo aveniva perche restavano vinti dalla cortesia e dall' arte sua, ma più dal genio della sua buona natura. Vasari Vita di Raff. p. 88. The two great luminaries of modern art, Michael Angelo and Raphael, have been duly honored by the artists of our country, their characters are eloquently compared in the fifth discourse of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the life and genius of each, have been yet more illustrated by the pen and the pencil, of their congenial biographer, Mr. Duppa.

NOTE 15——*VERSE* 260.

The daring Julio, though by Raphael train'd.—Julio Romano was born at Rome 1492, and died at Mantua 1546. His singular character is forcibly drawn by Vasari. He was, according to this writer, the most successful imitator of Raphael, the greater part of whose scholars became eminent, and were almost infinite in number. Raphael was particularly attentive to Julio, and loved him with the affection of a parent. Vasari Vita di Giulio.

NOTE 16——*VERSE* 268.

More richly warm, the glowing Titian knew.—We find frequent censures thrown upon Titian by the critics, for confining himself "to flattering the eye by the richness and truth of his colouring, without a proper attention to the higher branch of his art, that of interesting our feeling by affecting subjects;" the criticism is indeed extended to the painters of the Lombard school in general. Du Bos, Tom 1. sect, 10. Why Titian chose not to follow the finished method of his excellent cotemporaries, he declared to Francesco de Vargas, the ambassador of Charles the Vth at Venice. "I fear, (replied this eminent painter to the question of Vargas) I should never equal the extreme delicacy which distinguishes the pencils of Corregio, Parmegiano, and Raphael: and even though I should be successful enough to equal them, I should always rank below them, because I should be only accounted their imitator. In a word, ambition, which always attends the fine arts, has induced me to choose a way entirely new, in which I might make myself famed for something, as the great

masters have done in the route they have followed." Antoine Perez, dans la soixante-unieme de ses Secondes Lettres. This great artist enjoyed a long life of uninterrupted health, and died during the plague at Venice, in 1576, at the uncommon age of ninety-nine.

NOTE 17.——*VERSE* 282.

Soft as Catullus, sweet Corregio play'd—Antonio da Corregio.—Very different accounts are given by different authors of the birth and fortunes of this exquisite painter. His capital pictures were executed about the year 1512, according to Vasari; who relates, in a very affecting manner, the circumstances of his poverty and death. Having taken a journey on foot, in extremely hot weather, he imprudently drank cold water, which brought on a fever, of which he died at about the age of forty His colouring was most exquisitely adapted to the delicate softness of female beauty. To form a perfect picture of Adam and Eve (says an Italian writer on painting) Adam should be designed by Michael Angelo, and coloured by Titian. Eve designed by Raphael and coloured by Corregio. The ill fortune of Corregio, and the gross neglect of art, in the very city which he had adorned with the most exquisite productions of his pencil, are expressed with great feeling in a letter of Annibal Caracci, written while he was studying the works of Corregio, at Parma, to his cousin Lodovico, in 1580. Vide Raccolta deLettere, &c. Tom. I. p. 88.

NOTE 18——*VERSE* 284.

Though Parma claim it for her rival son.—Francesco Mazzuoli was born at Parma in 1504, and is thence usually called Parmegiano. His character is thus distinctly marked by Vasari: "Fu dal cielo largamante dotato di tutte quelle parti, che a un excellente pittore sono richieste, poi che diede alle sue figure, oltre quello, che si è detto di molti altri, una certa venusta, dolcezza e leggiadria nell attitudini, che fu sua propria e particolare." The same author gives us a particular description of the singular and admirable portrait, which this delicate artist drew of himself reflected from a convex mirror: he relates also some curious circumstances of his allegorical portrait of the emperor Charles the V. which he painted by memory, and by the recommendation of Pope Clement the VII. presented to the emperor at Bologna. The honest

biographer laments, with great feeling, the errors and misfortunes of this most promising painter, who being seized, early in life, with the frenzy of turning alchemist, impaired his health and fortune by this fatal pursuit; his attachment to which however some authors have questioned: a delirious fever put a period to his melancholy days at the age of thirty-six, in his native city of Parma, 1540.

NOTE 19.——*VERSE* 290.

Till the Caracci in a happier hour.—Lodovico Caracci, who with his cousins Annibal and Augustin established the famous academy of Bologna, was born in that city 1555. The circumstance that occasioned his death, as related by a French author, affords a singular proof how dangerous it is for an artist to confide in the partial judgment of his particular friends. Son dernier ouvrage, qui est une annonciation peinte à fresque, dans une des lunettes de la cathedrale de Bologne, ne reussit pas, son age, une vuê affoiblie, & la grande elevation de l'Eglise, furent cause qu'il se confia á un ami pour voir d'en bas l'effet de l'ouvrage. Cet ami luidit qu'il etoit bien, & qu'il pouvoit faire ôter les Echaufauds: il fut trompè; on critiqua fort cette peinture: Louis s'en chagrina de maniere qu'il se mit au lit, et Bologne perdit ce grand Homme en 1619. Abrége de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres. Paris, 8vo. 1762. Tom. 2. p. 50, Augustin, who quittedthe pencil for the engraver, and is much celebrated for his various accomplishments, died at Parma in 1602. Annibal, the immortal painter of the Farnese gallery, whom Poussin did not hesitate to rank with Raphael himself, died in a state of distraction at Rome, 1609. This melancholy event is described in a very affecting letter written by an Italian prelate, who attended him in his last moments. Raccolta, Tom 2. p. 384.

NOTE 20.——*VERSE* 295.

Young Zampieri ow'd his nobler name.—Domenico Zampieri, born at Bologna 1518, died at Naples, not without suspicion of poison, 1640. He entered early in life into the school of the Caracci, and was there honored with the affectionate appellation of Domenichino, from his extreme youth. His Communion of St. Jerome was compared by the judicious Poussin to the Transfiguration of Raphael: yet Du Fresnoy has passed a severe censure on

Domenichino, and affirms that he has less nobleness in his works than any other artist who studied in the school of the Caracci. So contradictory are the opinions of the two most enlightened judges in this delicate art!

NOTE 21.——*VERSE* 297.

The learned Lanfranc in their school arose.—Giovanni Lanfranco, born at Parma 1581, was knighted by Pope Urban the 8th, and died at Rome 1647.

NOTE 22——*VERSE* 299.

The tender Guido caught his graceful air.—Guido Reni was born in Bologna 1595: exquisite in grace, and sometimes admirable in expression, he was held during his life in the highest estimation. A fatal passion for gaming involved him in continued scenes of distress. His personal beauty was so great, that his master Lodovico Caracci is said to have drawn his angels from the head of Guido.

NOTE 23:——*VERSE* 305.

Titian's mute scholar, rival of his fame.—Titian is said to have resided in Spain from the year 1548 to 1553, and seems to have raised a strong passion for art in that country. His most eminent disciple was Juan Fernandez Zimenes de Navarrete, who is called by his Spanish biographer, the Titian of Spain. Though born deaf and dumb, from whence he derives his title *el Mudo,* he rose to great reputation as a painter, and was warmly patronized by his sovereign, as appears from the following incident. In painting the martyrdom of a Saint, he had introduced the figure of his personal enemy, who happened to be the King's secretary, in the character of the executioner: the secretary complained to his master, and petitioned that his features might be effaced; but his Majesty defended the painter, and ordered the figure to remain. In praising this singular genius, I have ventured to borrow something like a conceit from the famous Spanish poet Lope de Vega, who has celebrated his talents in the following verses:

Del Mudo Pintor famosissimo.

No quiso el cielo que hablasse,
Porque con mi entendimiento
Diesse mayor sentimiento
A las cosas que pintasse.

Y tanta vida les di
Con el pincel singular,
Que como no pude hablar,
Hize que hablassen por mi.

The poet also honored this favorite artist, who died 1572, with an epitaph, which turns on the same idea, and which the curious reader may find in the work, from whence I have taken this short account of him. Vidas de los Pittores Espanoles, por Palamino Velasco, octavo, London, 1744.

NOTE 24.——*VERSE* 310,

And thou, Velasquez, share the honor due.—Don Diego Velasquez de Silva, the most accomplished of the Spanish painters, was born at Seville, 1594 and closed his honorable and splendid life at Madrid in 1660. His master was Pacheco, a Spaniard, who united the sister arts of painting and poetry. Velasquez was patronized by the famous Olivarez, and had the honor of painting our Charles the first, during his visit at Madrid: perhaps he contributed not a little to form the taste and passion for art, by which that prince was so eminently distinguished. The Spanish painter rose to great honors in his own country, and had, like Rubens, the singular fortune to unite the character of an ambassador with that of an artist, being sent on an extraordinary commission, in 1648, to Pope Innocent X. One of his most striking historical pictures was the expulsion of the Moors from Spain; a noble national subject, which he painted for Philip the third, in competition with three Artists of reputation, and obtained the preference. But he is particularly celebrated for the spirit and energy of his portraits; concerning which there are two singular anecdotes related by his Spanish biographer; and the following may possibly amuse the reader: in 1639, he executed a portrait of Don Adrian Pulido Pareja, commander in chief of an armament appointed to New Spain; and pleased himself so well in the execution, that he affixed his name to the picture; a circumstance not usual with him. He had painted with pencils of uncommon length, for the sake of working at a greater distance, and with peculiar force; so that the picture (says my Spanish author) when near, is not to be distinguished, and at a distance, is a miracle. As Velasquez, after this portrait was finished, was at work in the palace, the king as usual, went pri-

vately to his apartment to see him paint; when observing the figure of Pareja and taking it for the real person, he exclaimed with surprise, "What! are you still here? have you not your dispatches? and why are you not gone?" but soon perceiving his mistake, he turned to Velasquez (who modestly doubted the reality of the deception) and said, "I protest to you it deceived me." For this story, such as it is, I am indebted to the author whom I have quoted in the preceding note. The celebrated Murillo, whose pictures are much better known in England than those of his master, was a disciple of Velasquez.

NOTE 25.——*VERSE* 316.

Thy care the soft, the rich Murillo form'd.—Don Bartolome Estevan Murillo was born in the neighbourhood of Seville, in 1613. His first master was Juan de Castillo; but he soon settled in Madrid, under the protection of Velasquez, who contributed to his improvement in the most generous manner. The Spaniards boast that Murillo became a great painter, without ever travelling out of Spain. He is said to have refused the offer of an establishment in England from Charles the second, and to have pleaded his age as an excuse for not quitting his own country; where he died, and was buried with great marks of honor, in 1685.

NOTE 26.——*VERSE* 323.

No mean historian to record their praise.—George Vasari, to whom we are indebted for a most valuable history of Italian painters, was born at Arezzo in Tuscany, 1511. Though the fame of the author seems to have eclipsed that of the artist, he rose to considerable eminence as a painter, and has left us a particular and entertaining account of himself and his pictures in the close of his great work; it is introduced with an apology, in which he speaks of his own talents, and extreme passion for his art, in the most modest and engaging manner. His generous desire of doing justice to the merit of others, is most happily rewarded in the following eulogy, by the great Thuanus: "ob excellentiam artis, quam historiâ accurate et eleganter scriptâ illustravit, Georgius Vasarius meruit, ut inter viros ingenio et literis præstantes accenseretur. Is Aretii in Etruriâ natus, pictor et architectus nostrâ ætate præstantissimus, diu

magno Etruriæ duci Cosmo, omnium liberalium artium, inter quas pictura et architectura ut referrentur obtinuit, fautori eximio navavit; editis passim ingenii sui ad stupendum omnium spetaculum monumentis, et tandem hoc anno climaeterico suo v kalend. Quintil, vivis exemptus est; exinde sicuti testamento caverat, Florentia ubi decessit, Aretium in patriam translatus; quo loco in principali secundum sedem episcopalem templo in sacello ab ipso juxta sumptuoso et admirando artificio extructo sepultus. Thuanus sub ann. 1574.

NOTE 27——VERSE 342.

On her pure style see mild Bologna claim.—The French author quoted above, under the article of Caracci, not only speaks with the greatest warmth of the obligation which painting owes to Lodovico Caracci, for having raised it from that state of corruption, into which it had fallen in all the schools of Italy; but at the same time points out also the various manierists who had chiefly contributed to its debasement. The style introduced by Lodovico is recommended by that excellent judge Sir Joshua Reynolds, see Discourse 1769, as better suited to grave and dignified subjects than the richer brilliancy of Titian.

NOTE 28——VERSE 345.

————*Titian's golden rays.*—This expression is borrowed from the close of that elegant sentence of modern Latin, which the author of Fitzosborne's letters has so justly commended, "Aureo Titiani radio, qui per totam tabulam gliscens eam verè suam dènunciat," see his excellent letter on Metaphors, p. 50.

NOTE 29——VERSE 353.

And Raphael's grace must yield to Rembrandt's force.—Rembrant Van Ryn, born near Leydon 1606, died at Amsterdam 1674, or, according to some accounts 1688. The numerous works of this great master, both with the engraver and pencil, have rendered him universally known. His singular studies, and the pride, which he seems to have taken in the natural force of his genius, appear strongly marked in the two following passages of his French biographer: "Les murs de son attelier couverts de vieux habits, de piques, et d'armures extraordinaires, etoient toutes ses etudes, ainsi qu'une armoire pleine

d'etoffes anciennes, & d'autres choses pareilles, qu'il avoit coutume d'appeller ses antiques. Rembrandt, qui se glorifioit de n'avoir jamais vu l'Italie, le dit un jour que Vandick l'etoit venu visiter à Amsterdam: & qui lui repondit "Je le vois bien." Rembrandt naturellement brusque reprit: "Qui es tu pour me parler de la sorte?" Vandick repondit; "Monsieur, je suis Vandick, pour vous servir." Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres, Tom. 3, p. 113.

NOTE 30——*VERSE* 356.

Yet, Holland, thy unwearied labours raise.—There is no article of taste, on which different writers have run more warmly into the opposite extremes of admiration and contempt, than in estimating the painters of Holland. Those who are enchanted by the sublime conceptions of the Roman school, are too apt precipitately to condemn every effort of the Dutch pencil as a contemptible performance; while those, who are satisfied with minute and faithful delineations of nature, find absolute perfection in the very pictures, which are treated by others with the most supercilious neglect. But sound and impartial judgment seems equally to disclaim this hasty censure, and this inordinate praise; and ranking the most eminent Dutch artists below the great Italian masters, yet allows them considerable and peculiar merit. A French author says, I think not unhappily, of the Dutch painters, that they are "dans la peinture, ce que le comique & le plaisant sonte dans la poesie." In design their forte is certainly humour, and they have frequently carried it to great perfection.

NOTE 31——*VERSE* 380.

Proud of the praise by Rubens' pencil won.—Sir Peter Paul Rubens, who is happily styled by Mr. Walpole, "the popular painter," was born at Cologne 1577, and died of the gout at Antwerp 1640. The history of his life furnishes a most striking incentive to the young painter's ambition. The many accomplishments which he possessed, the infinitude of works he produced, the reputation and esteem, the various honors and ample fortune which he so justly acquired, present to the mind an animating idea of what may be expected from a happy cultivation of talents in a course of constant

and spirited application. Though he visited the court of Charles the first in the public character of an ambassador, it does not appear how long he resided here; Mr. Walpole conjectures about a year. His pictures in the ceiling at Whitehall were not painted in England; which perhaps is the reason he has been at the pains of finishing them so neatly, that they will bear the nearest inspection; for he must have well known how greatly the reputation of any work depends on its first happy impression on the public, and concluded his pictures would be viewed by the king and court instantly on their arrival, and that the critics would not be candid enough to delay their remarks on them till they were elevated to their intended height. This noble work was falling into decay, from which state it has been rescued by that excellent artist Mr. Cipriani, to whose care it has been most judiciously committed to be cleaned and repaired. Rubens received for this work £3,000.

NOTE 32——*VERSE* 388.

Her soft Vandyke, while graceful portraits please.—Sir Anthony Vandyke, the celebrated scholar of Rubens, died of the same disorder which proved fatal to his master, and at a much earlier period of life. He was born at Antwerp 1598, expired in Black Fryars 1641, and was buried in St. Paul's, near the tomb of John of Gaunt. On his first visit to England he received no encouragement from the court, but Charles becoming soon afterwards acquainted with his merit, sent him an invitation to return. Vandyke embraced the offer with joy; and the king, who shewed him by frequent sittings, the most flattering marks of esteem, conferred on him the honor of knighthood in 1632, rewarding him also with the grant of an annuity of £200 for life.

NOTE 33——*VERSE* 391.

From Flanders first the secret power she caught.—The Low Countries, though little celebrated for inventive genius, have given to mankind the two signal discoveries, which have imparted, as it were, a new vital spirit both to literature and to painting. This honor however has been brought into question; Germany made a strong, but unsuccessful effort to rob Holland of the glory which she derives from the first invention of printing: and painting in oil (it has been said) was known in Italy before the time of John Van Eyck,

or John of Bruges, as he is commonly called; to whom that discovery is generally ascribed, about the year 1410. But Vasari, in his Life of Antonello da Messina, relates very particularly the circumstances of Van Eyck's invention, and the subsequent introduction of the secret into Italy. A most learned antiquarian and entertaining writer of our own time has supposed that Van Eyck might possibly "learn the secret of using oil in England, and take the honor of the invention to himself, as we were then a country little known to the world of arts, nor at leisure from the confusion of the times to claim the discovery of such a secret." Walpole's Anecdote of Painting, Vol. 1, p 29. The conjecture is not without some little foundation; but the conjectural claims which either Italy or England can produce to this excellent invention, are by no means sufficiently strong to annihilate the glory of the happy and ingenious Fleming. Since the preceding part of this Note was written, the reputation both of Van Eyck, and his encomiast Vasari, has been forcibly attacked in an Essay on Oil-painting, by Mr. Raspe; an Essay which discovers such a zealous attachment to the arts, and such an active pursuit of knowledge, as do great credit to its ingenious author. But, though I have perused it with the attention it deserves, it does not lead me to retract what I had said; because, after all his researches on this subject, it appears that although oil-painting was not absolutely the invention of Van Eyck, it was yet indebted to him for those improvements, which made it of real value to his profession. The ingenious Fleming seems therefore to be still entitled to those honors that have been lavished on his name, as improvement, in such cases, is often more useful and more meritorious than invention itself, which is frequently the effect of chance, while the former arises from well directed study.

NOTE 34——*VERSE* 395.

Where sumptuous Leo courted every muse.—The name of Medicis is familiar to every lover of the fine arts. John de Medicis, thè cardinal, was raised to the papal see 1513. He continued that liberal patronage and encouragement to learning, which had before distinguished his illustrious family. He was profuse and magnificent. The various and celebrated productions of taste and genius under his pontificate, clearly mark the age of Leo the Xth as one of the greatest æras of literature: an æra that has received recent illustrations from the genius of Mr. Roscoe.

NOTE 35.——*VERSE* 405.

Untrodden paths of art Salvator tried.—Salvator Rosa was born at a Village near Naples, in 1615. After a youth of poverty and adventure, he raised himself by his various and uncommon talents into lucrative reputation.—— Having passed nine years at Florence, in considerable employment, he settled in Rome, and died there at the age of fifty-eight, in 1673. He was one of the few characters who have possessed a large portion of pleasant vivacity and satirical humour, with a sublime imagination. His talents as a painter are universally celebrated; but his social virtues, though perhaps not inferior, are far from being so generally known. In the "Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura" there are many of his letters to his intimate friend Ricciardi, an Italian poet, and professor of moral philosophy at Pisa, which perfectly display the warmth of his friendship, and the generosity of his heart. They contain also some amusing anecdotes relating to his profession, and the great delight which he took in discovering historical subjects of a peculiar cast, untouched by other painters, and appearing to an ignorant eye almost beyond the limits of his art. Though he must have been wonderfully pleasant as a companion, and valuable as a friend, yet he laments that his satires had made him many enemies, and heartily wishes he had never produced them: in that which relates to painting, he exposes indeed the vices of his brethren with great freedom and severity. It is remarkable that his poetry abounds more with learned allusions than with high flights of imagination; yet in the satire I have mentioned, there is much whimsical fancy. An ape is introduced applying to a painter, and begging to learn his profession, as nature he says has given him a genius for the mimetic arts. The painter complies; but his disciple, after an apprenticeship of ten years, bids his master adieu, with many humorous execrations against the art of painting. Other parts of the poem contain many sensible and serious remarks on the abuses of the pencil; and as the author has given us a portrait of himself in his poetical character, I shall present it to the reader as a specimen of his style.

La state all ombra, e il pigro verno al foco
Tra modesti desi l' anno mi vede
Pinger per gloria, e poetar per gioco.

Delle fatiche mie scopo, e mercede
E sodisfare al genio, al giusto, al vero:
Chi si sente scottar, ritiri 'l piede.

Dica pur quanto sâ rancor severo:
Contro le sue saette ho doppio usbergo:
Non conosco interesse, e son sincero:
Non ha l'invidia nel mio petto albergo:
Solo zelo lo stil m'adatta in mano,
E per util commune i fogli vergo.
Satire di Salvator Rosa, p. 68, edit. Amsterdam, 1719.

NOTE 36——*VERSE* 427

The sage Poussin, with purest fancy fraught.—Nicolas Poussin was born at Andely in Normandy 1594: one of his first patrons was the whimsical Italian poet Marino, who being struck with some fresco works of the young painter at Paris, employed him in some designs from his own poem, l'Adone, and enabled him to undertake an expedition to Rome. He was recalled from thence by Cardinal Richelieu in 1640, but upon the death of Richelieu and the king, he returned to Rome, where he ended a life of primitive simplicity and patient application in 1665.

NOTE 37.——*VERSE* 435.

Then rose Le Brun, his scholar and his friend.—Charles Le Brun, universally known by his battles of Alexander, and his treatise on the passions, was born in Paris 1619: having presided over the French Academy, with great reputation, more than forty years, he died in 1690, partly as the author of the Abrégè assures us, from the chagrin which he received from a cabal raised against him in favor of his rival Mignard: but neither his own works, nor the partial favor of his patron Louvois, nor the friendship of Moliere, who has written a long poem in his praise, have been able to raise Mignard to the level of Le Brun.

NOTE 38.——*VERSE* 441.

Thy dawn, Le Sueur, announced a happier taste.—Eustache Le Sueur (who, without the advantage of studying in Italy, approached nearer to the manner of Raphael) was a native of Paris. Le Brun, who came to visit him in his last moments, is reported to have said on quitting his chamber, "Que la mort alloit lui tirer une grosse epine du pied." If he was capable of uttering such a sentiment, at such a time, he thoroughly deserved the fate which is mentioned in the preceding note.

NOTE 39.——*VERSE* 447.

Though Fresnoy teaches, in Horatian song.—Charles Alfonse du Fresnoy, author of the celebrated latin poem de Arte graphicâ, very hastily translated into English prose by Dryden, was himself a painter of some eminence, and and the intimate friend of Mignard. He died in a village near Paris, at the age of forty-four, in 1665.

NOTES TO THE SECOND EPISTLE.

NOTE 40.——*VERSE* 15.

Though foreign theorists with system blind.—The vain and frivolous speculations of some eminent French authors, concerning our national want of genius for the fine arts, are refuted with great spirit in an igenious essay by Mr. Barry, entitled, "an Enquiry into the real and imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England." As this work highly distinguishes the elegance of his pen, his Venus rising from the sea does equal honor to his pencil.

NOTE 41——*VERSE* 33.

Fierce Harry reign'd, who, soon with pleasure cloy'd.—In this short account of the influence which the different characters of our Sovereigns have had on the progress of national art, the author is indebted principally to Mr. Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting.

NOTE 42.——*VERSE* 45.

Untaught the moral force of art to feel.—An accomplished critic of our own time has touched on *the moral efficacy of picture,* with his usual elegance and erudition. After having illustrated the subject from the writings of Aristotle and Xenophon, he concludes his remarks with the following reflection: "Yet, considering its vast power in morals, one cannot enough lament the ill destiny of this divine art, which, from the chaste handmaid of virtue, hath been debauched, in violence of her nature, to a shameless prostitute of vice, and procuress of pleasure." Hurd's note on the following line of Horace:

"Suspendit picta vultum mentemque tabella."

To this let me add one observation for the hononr of our English artists! the prostitution of the pencil, so justly lamented by this amiable writer, is perhaps less frequent in this kingdom, than in any country whatever, in which painting has been known to rise to an equal degree of perfection.

NOTE 43:——*VERSE* 93.

Yet to thy palace Kneller's skill supplied.—Sir Godfrey Kneller, born at Lubec 1646, settled in England 1674, was knighted by King William, created a Baronet by George the first, and died 1723. No painter was ever more flattered by the muses; who gave him credit for talents which he never displayed. Dryden says, in his enchanting epistle to Kneller:

> Thy genius, bounded by the times, like mine,
> Drudges on petty draughts, nor dares design
> A more exalted work, and more divine.

But the drudgery of the poet arose from the most cruel necessity; that of the painter, from avarice, the bane of excellence in every profession! If Sir Godfrey had any talents for history, which is surely very doubtful, we have, as Mr. Walpole well observes, no reason to regret that he was confined to portraits as his pencil has faithfully transmitted to us "*so many ornaments of an illustrious age.*" Though I have partly subscribed to the general idea, that William, in whose reign this painter principally flourished, "contributed nothing to the advancement of arts," yet I must observe, that his employing Kneller to paint the beauties at Hampton Court, his rewarding him with knighthood, and the additional present of a gold medal and chain, weighing 300 lb. may justify those lines of Pope, which describe "the hero, William" as an encourager of painting.

NOTE 44——*VERSE* 97.

While partial taste from modest Riley turn'd.—John Riley was born in London 1646; Mr. Walpole relates an anecdote of his being much mortified by Charles the Second; who, looking at his own picture, exclaimed, "Is this like me? then, ods-fish, I am ugly fellow." The same author says happily of this artist, "With a quarter of Sir Godfrey's vanity, he might have persuaded

the world he was as great a master." Notwithstanding his extreme modesty, he had the good fortune to be appointed principal painter soon after the revolution, but died an early martyr to the gout 1691.

NOTE 45.——*VERSE* 101.

And Thornhill's blaze of allegory gilt.—Sir James Thornhill, born in Dorsetshire, 1676, was nephew to the celebrated Sydenham, and educated by the liberality of that great physician. He afterwards acquired a very ample fortune by his own profession; was in parliament for Weymouth, knighted by George the second, and died 1732. His talents as a painter are universally known, from his principal works at Greenwich, St. Paul's, &c.

NOTE 46.——*VERSE* 111.

The youthful noble, on a princely plan.—Many years ago, the late Duke of Richmond opened, in his house at Whitehall, a gallery for artists, completely filled with a small, but well chosen collection of casts from the antique, and engaged two eminent artists to superintend and direct the students. This noble encouragement of art, though superseded by a royal establishment, is still entitled to remembrance and honor: it not only served as a prelude to more extensive institutions, but contributed much towards forming some capital artists. The name of Mortimer is alone sufficient to reflect a considerable lustre on this early school.

NOTE 47——*VERSE* 134.

Teach but thy transient tints no more to fly.—Although the excellencies of Reynolds make us peculiarly regret the want of durability in his exquisite productions; yet he is far from being the only artist, whose pictures soon discover an appearance of precipitate decay. Fugitive colouring seems indeed to be a prevalent defect among painters in oil;—and it must be the most ardent wish of every lover of art, that so great an evil may be effectually remedied. As the royal academy is a society of enlightened artists, established for the improvement of every branch of painting, it may be hoped that they will pay attention to this mechanical point,

as well as to the nobler acquirements of art, and employ some person, who has patience and abilities for such an office, to discover, by a course of experiments, to what cause this important evil is owing. If it be found to rise from the adulteration of colours, oils, and varnishes, might it not be eligible for the academy to follow the example of another profession, who, where health and life are concerned, obviate the difficulty of getting their articles genuine from the individual trader, by opening a shop at the expence of the Society, to prepare and sell the various ingredients, free from those adulterations which private interest might otherwise produce? But there may be no just ground of complaint against the integrity of the colourman, and this failure may perhaps arise from the artist's mixing his colours and their vehicles, in improper proportions to each other; that is, instead of painting with oil properly thickened with colour, using oil only, fully stained with it, to which a proper subsistence (or body as the painters call it) is given by strong gum varnishes; in short, using more vehicle than colour; by which, although most brilliant and transparent effects may be produced, yet the particles of colour are too much attenuated, and divided from each other, and consequently less able to with-stand the destructive action of light. If the deficiency complained of originates from this source, the academy by a careful course of experiments, may be able clearly to ascertain what preparations of the more delicate colours are most durable; what oils and varnishes will best preserve the original brilliancy of the paint; what are the best proportions for this purpose, in which they can be used; and how far glazing (that almost irresistible temptation to oil painters) may or may not be depended on. All those points are at present so far from being known with certainty, that perhaps there are not two painters, who think perfectly alike on any one of them. The author hopes that the gentlemen of the pencil will pardon his presuming to offer a hint on this delicate subject, with which he does not pretend to be intimately acquainted. The ideas, which he has thus ventured to address to them, arise only from the most ardent wish, that future ages may have a just and adequate sense of the flourishing state of painting in England in the reign of George the third, and that our present excellent artists may not be reduced to depend on the uncertain hand of the engraver for the esteem of posterity.

A very liberal critic*, in his flattering remarks on the poem, seems, in speaking of this note, to mistake a little the meaning of its author, who alluded only to that defect in colouring, where the finer tints are so managed, for the sake of an immediate and short-lived brilliancy, that they sink very soon into no colour at all. He did not mean to touch on those changes in painting, where the colours all grow darker, the lights all become brown, and the shadows one mass of black. This is likewise a great evil, and calls aloud for redress. Perhaps the critic above mentioned has pointed out the true cause of this defect, viz. the indiscriminate blending of the colours, and the not using pure, simple, uncompounded tints.

NOTE 48——*VERSE* 138.

The leading principles of liberal art.—I embrace with pleasure the opportunity of paying this tribute to the great artist here mentioned, who was not only at the head of his profession, but may justly be ranked among the first writers of the age. His discourses, not merely calculated for the improvement of the young artists to whom they are addressed, contain principles of true and universal taste, embellished with great brilliancy of imagination, and with equal force of expression.

NOTE 49.——*VERSE* 151.

Thy Ugolino, &c.—As the subject of this admirable picture is taken from a poet so little known to the English reader as Dante, it may not perhaps be impertinent to say, that in Richardson's discourse on the science of a connoisseur, there is a translation of the story in English blank verse. A noble author, now living, has obliged the world with a translation of it in rhyme. As to the picture, no artist could express more happily the wild and sublime spirit of the poet from whom he drew. We may justly apply to him the compliment which a lively Italian addressed to a great man of his own country, but of far inferior expression:

" Fabro gentil, ben sai,
Ch' ancor tragico caso è caro Oggetto,
E che spesso l' horror va col diletto."

MARINO

* *Vide* the Gentleman's Magazine for November 1778, p. 526.

NOTE 50.——*VERSE* 165.

Now art exults with annual triumphs gay.---While we are delighted with the increasing splendor of these annual entertainments, it is but just to remember, that we are indebted to the society of arts and sciences for our first public exhibition of paintings. The different societies of artists soon followed so excellent an example; and our rapid and various improvements in this lovely art reflect the highest honor on this happy institution. Our exhibitions at once afford both the best nursery for the protection of infant genius and the noblest field for the display of accomplished merit: nor do they only administer to the benefit of the artist, and the pleasure of the public: they have still a more exalted tendency; and when national subjects are painted with dignity and force, our exhibitions may justly be regarded as schools of public virtue.

NOTE 51——*VERSE* 248.

To the soft crayon of the graceful Read.—I seem to owe an expression of gratitude to this amiable female artist, as she afforded the encouragement of praise to a poetical production of my childhood. When I was a boy between nine and ten years of age, she painted a miniature of me as a bracelet for my mother: and at that period I presented to her a copy of verses, in which I presumed to describe several of her pictures, particularly a portrait in crayons of that exquisite actress Mrs. Cibber, in the character of the Fair Penitent. My reader has probably lost nothing by the destruction of the verses I have mentioned, but I confess my own curiosity would have been gratified, had I chanced to discover in a collection of old papers, among which they were supposed to exist, even a fragment of that early composition.

NOTE 52.——*VERSE* 255.

Thy talents, Hogarth! &c.—William Hogarth was born in London 1698, and put apprentice to an engraver of the most ordinary class; but his comic talents, which are said to have appeared first in the prints to Hudibras, soon raised him to fame and fortune. He married a daughter of Sir James Thornhill, and died 1764. The peculiar merits of his pencil are unquestionable.

His analysis of beauty has been found more open to dispute; but however the greater adepts in the science may differ on its principles, it may certainly be called an honorable monument of his genius and application.

NOTE 53——*VERSE* 370.

Whose needy Titian calls for ill paid gold.——Richardson has fallen into a mistake concerning the famous Danaë, and other pictures of Titian, which he says (in quoting a letter of Titian's without considering its address) were painted for Henry the VIIIth of England; a tyrant indeed, voluptuous and cruel, but still less detestable than the sullen and unnatural Philip the IId of Spain, who filled up the measure of his superior guilt by the horrid assassination of his son. Philip on his marriage with Mary, assumed the title of King of England; and to him Titian addressed the letter, which speaks of the pictures in question: the painter frequently mentions his attachment to his unworthy patron. His solicitude to ensure his protection and favor, is strongly marked in the following short passage of a letter which he addressed to one of Philip's attendants. "Mando ora la poesia di Venere e Adone, nella quale V. S. vedrà, quanto spirito e amore so mettere nell' opere di sua Maestà." Raccolta, tom. 2, p. 21. How poorly this great artist was rewarded for his ill-directed labour appears very forcibly in a long letter of complaint, which he had spirit enough to address to the king on the many hardships he suffered in being unable to obtain the payment of the pension which had been granted to him by the emperor Charles the Vth, Raccolta, tom. 2, p. 379.

NOTE 54——*VERSE* 436.

Bid English pencils honor English worth.——The great encouragement given our painters to select subjects from English history, has of late years been very observable. Many individuals of rank and fortune have promoted this laudable plan with spirit and effect; and the society of arts and sciences have confined their premiums to subjects taken from the British annals.

NOTE 55——*VERSE* 441.

Her wounded Sidney, Bayard's perfect peer.——The gallant, the amiable, and accomplished Sir Philip Sidney may be justly placed on a level with the noble Bayard, "Le Chevalier sans peur & sans reproche;" whose glory has

of late received new lustre from the pen of Robertson and the pencil of West. The striking scene here alluded to, is forcibly described by the noble and enthusiastic friend of Sidney, the Lord Brooke. See Biograph. Britan. Art. Sidney. The particulars are also minutely described, and with great feeling, in a letter from his uncle Leicester to Sir Thomas Heneage, quoted in Collins's Memoirs of the Sidneys. The tide of national admiration flowed very strong in favor of Sidney, when Mr. Walpole, in speaking of Lord Brooke, appeared to check the current, but the merits of Sidney are sufficient to bear down all opposition. Instead of joining the elegant author I have mentioned, in considering Sir Philip Sidney as "an astonishing object of temporary admiration," I am surprised that so judicious an author should ever question so fair a title to universal regard. The learning and munificence, the courage and courtesy, of Sidney endeared him to every rank; and he justly challenges the lasting affection of his country from the closing scene of his life, in which heroism and humanity are so beautifully blended. I never can think this accomplished character any ways degraded by his having written a tedious romance (in which however there are many touches of exquisite beauty and spirit) to amuse a most amiable sister, whom he tenderly loved; or by his having threatened an unworthy servant of his father's with death in a hasty billet, merely to intimidate and deter him from the future commission of an infamous breach of trust, in opening his letters. I gladly seize an opportunity of observing that more ample justice has been recently rendered to the subject of this Note by Dr. Zouch. In a copious life of Sir Philip Sidney, (published by T. Payne, &c. 1808) the biographer has displayed the various merits of a popular English hero, whom detraction, instead of degrading, has raised to higher renown by exciting this judicious and faithful eulogist to give new interest and new lustre to the excellence and dignity of his character.

NOTE 56.——*VERSE* 468.

The heroic daughter of the virtuous More.—Margaret, eldest daughter of the celebrated Sir Thomas More. The scene which I have proposed for the subject of a picture, is taken from the following passage in Ballard: "After Sir Thomas More was beheaded, she took care for the burial of his body in the chapel of St. Peter's ad Vincula, within the precincts of the Tower; and

afterwards she procured his corpse to be removed, and buried in the chancel of the church at Chelsea, as Sir Thomas More in his life-time, had appointed. His head having remained about fourteen days upon London Bridge, and being to be cast into the Thames to make room for others, she bought it. For this she was summoned before the council, as the same author relates, and behaved with the greatest firmness, justifying her conduct upon principles of humanity and filial piety. She was, however imprisoned, but soon released; and dying nine years after her father, at the age of thirty-six, was buried at St. Dunstan's, in Canterbury. The head of her father, which she had preserved, with religious veneration, in a box of lead, was, at her particular request committed with her to the grave. It was seen standing on her coffin in the year 1715, when the vault of the Roper (her husband's family) was opened See Ballard's memoirs of Learned Ladies, p. 36. The character of this amiable woman is happily drawn both by Addison and Walpole. She married at the age of twenty, William Roper, Esq. of Kent, to the infinite satisfaction of her father; for she seems to have been the dearest object of his parental affection, which is very strongly marked in his letters addressed to her. She was indeed most eminently distinguished by her learning, in an age when the graces of the mind were regarded as an essential article in female education: but the beauty and force of her filial piety reflects a still superior lustre on this accomplished woman. There is more than one passage in her life, which would furnish an admirable subject for the pencil. Her interview with her father on his return to the Tower, is mentioned as such by Mr. Walpole.

NOTE 57.——*VERSE* 523.

But, oh! how poor the prostrate Satan.—It is remarkable, that the greatest painters have failed in this particular. Even Guido and Raphael are deficient in the figure of Satan. Richardson observes, in his description of the pictures of Italy,—" Je n'ai jamais vu d'aucun maître une representation du Diable, prince des diables, qui me satisfit." Page 500. In recommending this subject to the pencil, it may be proper to observe, that it is not only extremely difficult, but even attended with danger, if we credit the following curious anecdote, in a medical writer of great reputation: " Spinello, fameux, Peintre Toscan, ayant peint la chute des anges rebelles, donna des traits si ter-

ribles à Lucifer, qu'il en fut lui-meme saisi d'horreur, & tout le reste de sa vie il crut voir continuellement ce Demon lui reprocher de l'avoir representé soús une figure si hidieuse." Tissot de la Santè des Gens de Lettres. As this story is so singular, it may amuse some readers to see it in the words of Vasari, from whom Tissot seems to have taken it. The Italian biographer says, in describing a picture by Spinello Aretino, who flourished in the close of the 14th century, "Si vede un Lucifero gia mutato in bestia bruttissima. E si compiacque tanto Spinello di farlo orribile, e contraffatto, che si dice (tanto puo alcuna fiata l'immaginazione) che la detta figura da lui dipinta gl'apparue in sogno domandandolo, doue egli l'hauvesse veduta si brutta e per che fattole tale scorno con i suoi penelli: E che egli svegliatosi dal sonno, per la paura, non potendo gridare, con tremito grandissimo si scosse di mani era che la moglie destatasi lo soccorse: ma niente di manco fu per cio a rischio, strignendogli il cuore, di morirsi per cotale accidente, subitamente. Ben che ad ogni modo spiritaticcio, e con occhi tondi, poco tempo vivendo poi si condusse alla morte lasciando di se gran desiderio a gli amici." Vasari vita di Spinello Aretino, p. 218. edit. di Giunti.



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2 The introduction of Dr. Slop, into the parlour of Mr. Shandy to face page 31.
3 Sketch of a shipwreck to face page 84.
4 The head of Sensibility to face page 121.
5 Study for the head of Miranda to face page 141.
6 Portrait of Madame de Genlis to face page 170.
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8 Head of our Saviour from a very large unfinished picture of the Temptation in the Wilderness, to face page 231.
9 The infant Shakespeare to face page 304.
10 Newton with the Prism to face page 314.
11 Portrait of Romney from a medallion executed in 1795, to face the last page of the Life.
12 Portrait of Romney Robinson to face page 335.

[illegible] there.

Some high prices were realised at the picture sale in connection with the disposal of the Wertheimer collection at Christie's Rooms on Saturday. To take a few examples, for the celebrated picture by Rembrandt of a young woman in bed, 5,000gs. was given; "A Village Fete," by Teniers, fetched 1,430gs.; the interior of a guard room, by the same artist, brought 1,700gs.; "L'Accorde Parfait," by Watteau, from Miss James's collection, 2,100gs.; the famous portrait of Lady Sondes, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 4,100gs.; Romney's portrait of Lady Hamilton as a Welsh girl, 2,100gs.; "A Little Girl Feeding a Fawn," by the same artist, 5,100gs.; and a portrait of Lady Augustus Murray, Duchess of Suffolk, also by Romney, 3,800gs.

Unwonted excitement prevailed at a remarkable sale of pictures on Saturday, when a total sum of £87,144 was realised. The pictures put up to auction were for the most part of the early British school, and had been the property of the late Mr James Price of Barcombe, Paignton, and formerly of Liverpool. For Gainsborough's "Lady Musgrave" £8,000 had been bid, when Mr Campbell, solicitor, suddenly appeared on the scene and contested the purchase until a sum of £10,000 had been reached, at which price it was knocked down to him. In the same room, fifteen years ago, the picture was bought for 1,000 guineas. Among the other high prices secured were the following:—"Carnarvon Castle," by W. Muller, said to have been purchased for the Nation, 2,300 guineas; "Helvoetsluys" (Turner), £6,400; "The Val d'Aosta" (Turner), 4,000 guineas; "Going to the Ball" (Turner), 2,800 guineas; "Returning from the Ball" (Turner), 2,800 guineas; "Mortlake" (Turner), 5,200 guineas; "Lady Hamilton" (Romney), 2,030 guineas; "Miss Harriet Shore" (Romney), 1,850 guineas; "Lady Urith Shore" (Romney), 1,800 guineas; "Lady Melbourne" (Sir Joshua Reynolds), 2,300 guineas; and "Lady Clarges" (Gainsborough), 2,000 guineas.

D.J. June 1895

An extraordinary price was paid for a picture in London on Thursday afternoon. The work was from the brush of George Romney, and was painted for the fourth Duke of Marlborough. The subject was an allegorical one, and represented the Duke's two daughters, Caroline, afterwards the Viscountess Clifden, and Lady Elizabeth Spencer as the sister arts Music and Painting. The Duke presented the picture to Lady Clifden, and it was in the possession of the family when it was brought to the hammer, by order of the executors of the late Viscount Clifden. The bidding started at 1,000 guineas, but it rose by rapid strides to 7,700 guineas. Then, by stages of 25 guineas, it reached the enormous figure of 10,500 guineas, when it was knocked down to Mr C. Wertheimer. The price paid exceeds by four or five thousand guineas the highest ever given for a Romney, who even at the height of his popularity rarely received as much as £100 for a whole-length portrait.

D. J. 6/13/96

Apropos of the £11,025 paid the other day for the Clifden Romney, connoisseurs, as well as the general public, may be interested to know that only six other pictures have been sold by auction during recent years for sums exceeding £10,000. They are:—Gainsborough's famous Duchess of Devonshire, which subsequently disappeared, or was stolen, £10,605; Madame de Pompadour, by F. Boucher, in the Lonsdale sale, £10,395; A View in Holland, by Hobbema and A. Van de Velde, in the Dudley sale, 1892, £10,080; and The Crucifixion, by Raphael, at the same sale, £11,130; Lady Betty Delme and Children, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, £11,500, in 1894; and Lady Mulgrave, by Gainsborough, £10,500, in the Price sale last year. The Virgin with the Candelabra, by Raphael, was offered in the Munro sale at Christie's some years ago, but was bought in at £19,500. This picture has been in the market ever since, and, although it has been hawked all over Europe, is still awaiting a bona-fide purchaser.—"Daily Telegraph."

D.J. 7/6.96

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